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LE MARQUIS DE LEUVILLE.

POEMS

and AELIA

from ENTRENOUS

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LE MARQUIS DE LEUVILLE.

POEMS

AND

AELIA.

Illustrated.

FROM

“ENTRE-NOUS.”

TENTH THOUSAND.



(PUBLISHED BY CHAPMAN & HALL, LONDON.)

AMERICAN NEWS COMPANY, NEW YORK.

[1884]

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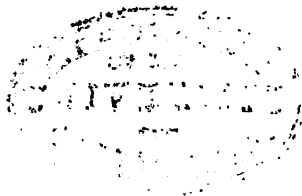
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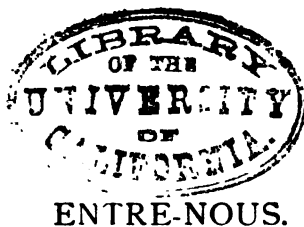
TO FLORENCE.

*Like the cushat to his nest,
Like the bee to honey-cell,
And the fisherman across the sands into the bonnie lee,
I have made you of my best
Just a rosary to tell,
If you will raise my rustic beads to such a dignity.*

*Because some came from the air,
And some from lips of flowers,
And many from the bosom of the wild majestic sea,
And more came fleet and fair,
From a Summer that was ours,
And I bring them, as in olden time, to you on bended knee.*

*Out of sorrow some have come,
From the griefs of human lives;
And some from aching hours they tried in vain to render
sweet,—
Take these as tears,—and some
Like a swirl of Autumn leaves,
To write your beauty down the grove beneath your little
feet.*





*Books not in a language
entirely your own in youth
should have some prefatory
account of themselves.*

VOSSIUS.

I HAD therefore better make some apologies for my
"French-English."

Poetry is an inconvenient thing. Yet poets *will* dream in spite of stern reality perpetually staring them in the face ; and painters still rise in the morn from their rich visions of the night, without a beam of hope for daily bread.

"*Mais ils sont à nous ces beaux palais !*" said either Alfred de Vigny, or Sarasin or Montrenil—or some of those *petits-maîtres* of the Port Royal or elsewhere. (The truth is, I am possessed by a nomad Asmodeus, who is continually transgressing my geography and protruding his two sticks where I get a little confused in following him.)

"*Its sont à nous ces beaux palais !*" . . . How well it rings ! But these war-cries, born of a passant feeling that

God creates for the poet and the poet for man, are most transient. The *true* poet's calling is a hard crusade. He sheds the tears that others dream of:—out of his sorrow comes his song, and even with this urgent inward drouth he forgets his *own* grief, and when the sounds of the street come louder through the windows newly opened to let in the first of Spring, he vows his soul to the lay of the poor,—the unprofitable psalm of the right against the wrong. His spiritual being is the scene of some invisible tragedy when we see him, far away: when the streams are strewed with leaves, and the innocent lights and shadows lie peaceful across the road, looking wistful as an Autumn afternoon, with "Fall" weather in his heart, seeking in heaven some dead spirit, while his own seems like a moth in the dew; growing white with one sweet souvenir safe beneath the snow upon his brow, and needing indeed to feel that love is older than death, and mercy the song of the spheres.

Or farther still, in the mute desert, exiled; gazing from his little tent, with a door whence the swallows come; floating over taintless tides skyward through the beautiful marvellous space, to the blue meadows among the clouds untravelled by the sun, earnestly, blindly searching amid the voiceless music of our inward sight for the one great chord—human and divine.

Or in Venice, on the Giudecca, where the muffled melody of a hundred loving hearts half hid in lamplit

gondolas, has sent his soul on sapphire wings athwart the night-clad Adriatic, where the moon gathers half the sea into her smile, and makes each foam-flecked wavelet fair ;—soaring higher yet, to seek the one note of music that shall make all heaven friends. Or else even plunging from his gondola to taste the very sea itself : swimming by its side without knowing or caring whether he went to perdition or not ; and thence maybe to beautiful Verona,—beautiful Verona !—in memory of Romeo and Juliet :—swerving from his love's balcony in the strange light, half from the fading window, half from the kindling dawn, hanging between heaven and the Adige, and ready to take a hand at haphazard for his life, or a two-handed sword for his love. Salvator Rosa is much my ideal, and I do not see why a poet should not be a mighty hunter, and hold his own with a sword or a sonnet ; the soul of honour, *et tout pour son altesse la femme*.

Naturally, here I am only speaking of the *true* poet, *par la grâce de Dieu—le gentilhomme passionné*—not the *fanfaron* of a kind of artistic carnality, nor the *poète d'occasion* ; the charlatan of verse, who lights his equivocal incense on the dowdy shrine of human vanity, and is about as full of poetry as a Kidderminster carpet, and as much at home in the beautiful country lands as a tin rat-trap in a bank of flowers, and who becomes *poussif* with piling up his ethereal gewgaw confectionery. Glorifying—grotesquely jubilating,

in fact, in a blinkard peacockism to advertise his own tail.

By-the-way, let me say that I am *not* levelling a covert *stigmata* at any personal friends here, and I mention it because I once inadvertently incurred a virulent hatred (which I still recognize by an occasional squib against me) for having created, in a little comedietta for amateurs, the character of a—Plagiarist—who led a blighted existence from having had *one original* thought; which he never dared to use because he could not for the life of him remember *where he got it from*. But it is this kind of *chiffonier musqué* who has caused us to feel so utterly sick of “*Spring*,” and the present generation to be born tired of “*Autumn*,” and such things as “*Lines on Receiving a Green Pen-wiper*,” etc. Though these little pipers who sing their little loves gently and equally in their own verses and other people’s, are nothing to that dynamic pocket giant of song who *knows* he can fluster the stars with his candlestick, and frighten the sea with his walking-stick; a kind of Gargantuan Orpheus, in fact, who, when he passes over the earth, the mountains double up without thinking of the marmalade they make of the travellers in the tunnels.

Let us dismiss these *negres blancs* with even the heartrending dying words of poor Alfred de Musset, “*Dormir! enfin je vais dormir.*”

For my part, inasmuch as I *have* to speak of my own

work in this prefatory salmagundi, I may truly say that though I write prose to raise some principle of right against wrong, or to help the oppressed, I never commit a line of poetry if I can help it; but I suppose my sensuous delight in form and colour does not enable me entirely, in painting, to give forth some idyllic accretions which, if I do not get them out of the sentient precinct of my temperament, turn their points inward and give me pain. These are hidden tithes of the soul, and, while I try hard to pay them in full, I fear they make me often in need of the charities of the imagination. I write my unkempt verse almost in the exact form in which it first comes to me, with little after-finish, preferring to brave a scant countenance of hypercriticism, rather than lose any possible relationship with high attributes it may have had, when its imperial prevalence compelled me to set it in its first raiment.

Moreover, I believe if you frankly write down some simple thought that is moving your heart, not *more* ungrammatically than is the wont of poets in general, you will surely find some other heart to understand it, and sympathize, if you have but patience to wait.

Yet in all picturing of thought, we should remember we are *ex*-pressing what we *see* in our heart's sight; and that which looks very different to the outward sight of those we wish to *im*-press, and goes through an exactly opposite process with them.

Poetry is ~~not~~ intended to run a subject to earth, but rather to elevate it and make poets of those to whom the writer appeals.

To take an earthly metaphor : All that is required of Poetry in her interocular moods is to be contagious ; therefore, though I may have only *joué du malheur en choisissant à tâlons*, yet if I could now and again touch some keynote that might solace one bereaved heart,— dispel some silvery web of a secret sorrow, or lead my reader into kindly dreams of his own, far sweeter probably than any I can weave for him, I am content to vanish, without button-holing him, as it were, with my *préciosité*.

Also, I have a painful consciousness of two things : first, my temperament is probably for the most part that of a painter, and secondly (as my critics have noted), having been reared principally among the traditions of France, I think mostly in French and conceive with the brush. I therefore ask for *la grande courtoisie* of forbearance for my prudent non-elaboration.

Undoubtedly, with labour the most wayward measures may be made polished metres ; but (unless the piece is for music) I hope to be forgiven if they are dear to me in their first poor array, when they came to me ; and I see them still in that sweet twilight, which we say in France is “*entre chien et loup*.” They are Bashi-bazouks rather than a martinet’s regulars, and poems *en peignoir*. My muse seems always to have her

hair astrew. *Nobody* is *en toilette*, and we are strictly *entre-nous de bon matin*.

The Press critics have been the cause of my ~~not~~ changing this form in poetry. They are the only sure and penetrating judges. I should feel very crestfallen if my work were full enough of mediocrities to "just hit" the "general public," and the Press having solidly approved, I feel my feeling strengthened.

I know that if they tried they could never find more faults in my verse than I do myself; and they always leave the correcting to me.

Nevertheless, a literary friend has collected their *favorable* verdicts on my work into a volume of two parts, forming about five hundred pages in octavo together, the second portion of which has been reprinted. I can only say I am proud of them.—I am most thankful to have them; and to the Press for those ~~urging~~ words, and I hold these judgments as a talisman against all the little *aboiements lucratifs* at one's heels from the lesser critics. I can hardly, perhaps, render my feeling in the matter more intelligibly than by saying over again that I value the opinion of the great Press more than all. That I like it as a body; feel proud when anything I write allows me to be "one among them," and having been with these hard-worked pioneers of the world's thought all over the earth, I know their ukase to be fearless, and themselves good men and true.



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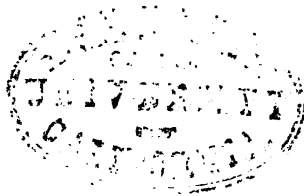
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POEMS

AND

AELIA.

Illustrated.



AELIA

A ROMANCE OF MEDIEVAL VENICE

"CAR LA FLEUR, QUI S'OUVRIE AVEC L'AUREE EN FLEURS,
ET QUI PAÏT À MINÉ DE SES BELLES COULEURS
ADMIRER LA SPLENDEUR TIMIDE,
SOUS SES COROLLES D'OR, LOIN DES YEUX IMPORTUNS,
AU FOND DE CE CALICE OÙ SONT TOUTS SES PARFUMS,
SOUVENT CACHE UNE PERLE HUMIDE!"

VICTOR HUGO.

"JOY KNOWS NOT WHAT IT SUFFERETH"

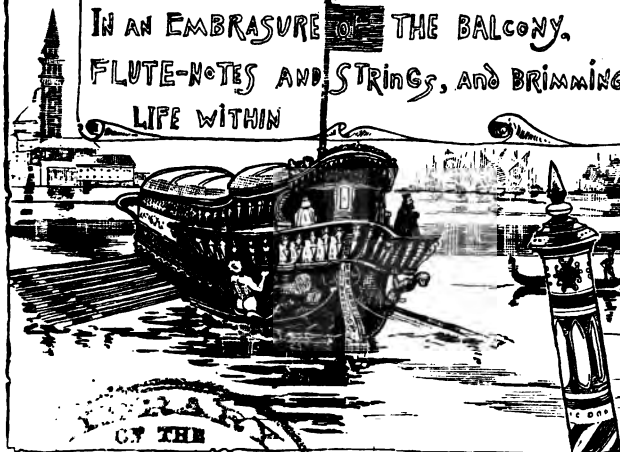
ASTIN.

"AU PRINTEMPS EN ITALIE, LES FLEURS, LES GAZONS, TOUT
MÉLAS, VOUS DIT, 'SOYEZ DEUX'."

LEUVILLE.

BY MELLOW JASPER COLUMNS UNDERNEATH
THE TRELLISED NIGHT OF LANGUID LEAF
AND FLOWER,

FAIR AELIA, THE COQUETTE, AND DARDAGIL,
THE DAWNING POET, SILENT LEANED APART
IN AN EMBRASURE OF THE BALCONY,
FLUTE-NOTES AND STRINGS, AND BRIMMING
LIFE WITHIN



Moved fluctuant past their temples, and the air
All filled with these, and overladen, drooped
E'en like some unseen angel's azure wing,
And ruffled in one long vibration low
The lamp-lit waters, where the moonlight curled
Close round the imaged moon.

O, happy tones !

Some swerved and sank in eddies down blue depths,
And some went tangled in the silver beams,
And wended homeward ways on paths to heaven.
And with voluptuous odours some were caught
And taken up and smoothly borne away
About fair ladies' ears in gondolas :
For it was Venice.

The Venice of wit and idlesse ; intrigue,
And sumptuous raiment, elegance and love :
The old sweet *Venezia del cinque*.
Bright Summer blushed brimful of brave romance
On the sea-city, in those knightly times,
And Moorish art lit up the Greek, and warmed
Quaint *quattro-cento* with its Eastern smile.
Already grief for glory gone shed round





A softening shade. There—night reigned infinite
 Yet was not night. But some Circassian
 Veiled maiden, come with violet eyes to hush
 The tranced spheres ;—with outheld hands to close
 The wavelet's eyelid, lull the deep canals
 And tell her love while sleep looked down on you
 And smiled, through low Venetian floating chimes.

Ælia, the spoiled and loveliest of Venice,
Del Veneto la bianca perla,
 The lady of the radiance, iris-veiled,
 Opal-like *Ælia*, fairest of the time
 And wilfullest coquette, would play with love,
 As with a treasure given her to play with ;
 It came so gayly decked, so knightly knelt :
 So many flattered, likening her beauty
 To the hanging gardens of the Lombard sky,
 That landward called the clouds that looked on her.

And thus her pride and queenlier caprice
 Grew up. All the nobles were but subjects ;
 And the women in their tongue had named her
 Heartless : and anon a courtly noble too
 Would think full courteously—they read aright :
 And yet at times, at times within her eyes

Were holy lures to dream in hazel depths,
And swimming shadows, endless and divine.
Two lovers, variously cast, diverse
In all things, stood the foremost in the crowd,
Artim and Dardagil. Great Artim won
The smile of Aelia's kin, and deigned to sue
For Aelia's.

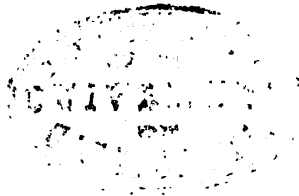
Little staid him where he loved.

Now he, men saw, was not of Latin race,
Thickset and strong, with hair upon his wrists -
Refined in vice, and with an understream
Of wile that marked him of his line. Ranked high
I' the State for many powers, and riches first.
His palace too, a paradise of wealth.
The flatteries of Artim were supreme,
And weighed his words. It cost him little toil
To weave his web for women, whom he stalked
As doth the many-wintered spider, grown
Fastidious with spoil. Meditating
He overcast her with a silent oath,
She should be his ; and he no man for jest.

The passion these men know hath oft been named
By love's own name, and such mere bounden slave

To some such gnawing thirst will fiercely swear,
He *loves* a maid whose soul hangs like a lark's
Fresh song in upper air, though he but craves
The sweet bird's blood to gorge him with and spoil.
All otherwise the loyal Dardagil,
Strange with the wayward passion of the Muse,
And his fantastic beauty, and soft tint
Of olive. Idle, tall ; as those that leaned
In Moorish Lion-courts, when Latin blood
Was swift. Most courtly and full warm ; yet 'neath
His dreamy indolence a panther lurked.

And Artim almost wondered at his look
Of merry, dauntless truth that upward glanced
From eyes that dimmed with others' woe alone—
Nor every man could read him right. His friend
He well could love, as women love, from out
The heart, by inspiration, giving all
And asking naught. Of grand old martial race
He came. Unlike them, save when stung with heat
Of conflict he would wake and rouse his sires
That slumbered to his harping. Proud of birth
Let them be ;—he to rank among the bards
In high noblesse and heraldry of God.



Are poets loved of women? So desired,
Caressed, yet are they loved before the realm
Within them is revealed—the scorn, the strength,
The charity, the majesty? This one
Sweet Ælia mocked, tho' mockery of him
She could not suffer: him she threw her chains
Around, divining well this captive knight
The truest there, though scarce divining why;
And hardly knowing yet the pain she gave,
The bliss, the fire, the torture of our love
That youth nor reason e'er shall comprehend.
The splendor of the vacillating Spring
Through orange bloom and pergola was hers,
And hers' Venetian April's bright caprice
Of frowns and smiles. Child and woman, fair
Above them all, and ever taught to feel
The vision bright and dream of love she was;
The gentle monotone of Pulci now—
Aun Boiardo's brighter dream, the thought
Of Cimabue or strong pale Zeuxis
In the past.

Standing by the lighted shrine
To-night upon the terrace, with the stars,
Herself the star of half the nobles' eyes,

She leaned with all her swerving light of gems
Above the wavy palace with its lamps,
And softly-ruffled globe of moon, that glowed
Below the star-shot tide.

And musing thus :

Save just where once or twice, as if by chance,
There lay a smooth-cut emerald, as 'twere
Asleep in veiled glow, her robe was white ;
Up-fastened here and there with bars of gold,
Dead gold, and fell in myriad idle folds,
And went away in waves. The dead gold looped
Her living hair up, and became a part
Of secret Summer scent and balmy sheen
Of amber. Soft-hued, smooth-cut emeralds
Upon her neck and breast, she looked a dream ;
And there was not a glitter or an edge
In all that presence ; but a charm asleep,
A love-lit low glow, ruby-like, that rose
And passed when she passed, sailing through the sight
In only white and green, and gold, dead gold.

She stole from Artim through bright groups, wherein
Refinement like a perfume filled the air,
And raising here her eyes to Dardagil,

"Thou lovest me," she said ; "tell me thereof.
Or is it much, or little, say, Sir Knight ;
For are there not varieties in love ?
I long ;—well—fear to know, yet tell me truth !
I'd have a true love-tale to-night ; this night
As Eastern as the fashion of thy brow.
Ha ! would I trust thee wert thou not a poet ?
Poets, they say, will only wed with truth.
If they are false, then who is true, alack !
I am spoilt, they say, so tell me truly all."—

Ever in woman's heart are two refrains
With echoes full. Their songs are : Vanity,
And Love. Artim woke the first : Dardagil
Roused love ; and Aelia listened unto both.

Her lover answered her. All clouded each
Sweet sign upon his ever-speaking face.
"You would have truth ?" Then for the thousandth time,
Remembrance of her tortures struck the wave
Of passion for her in his heart, they met
And crashed like maddened waters. "Love is truth.
I love ! And surely truth is mine—a trifle ?
A decoration for my lady's hair ?
Yea ! if thou wilt. I love thee, Aelia, love thee,

O ! as this music loves the air it leans on !
I love thee as low music loves the touch
That's mother to it. As that far-off wave,
With naught but other striving waves around,
Must love the shore. Aye ! or the mariner
That faints on it and floats with that last thought
That life could hold of love. Shall I tell truth ?
All truth, and wilt thou hear it ?" " Yea," she said.
" Then, Aelia, I do love thee with a sense
So much above mere life, beyond mere death,
That when thou leav'st me in thy changeful moods,
Like swallows turning dappled breasts to go,
My brain becomes a maze of folly,—mad !
And drunken shades of my distorted thought,
Seem leading through my soul some reckless slow
Weird minuet of inebriated night !
My brows should burn the world up with their fire,
And fold so soft to serve and tend thee. Yet
How dare I give myself to thee and doubt
Thy choice were wealthier ? Queen sunflower of love,
I know that thou couldst lull me when thou wouldst
To deep divine entrancement ; and that thou
Couldst bid me live the life of spirits ; drown
Or dance me on the ripple of the hour.

O ! at the thought, I seem like yon sea-sands,
Part, part left dry of ocean, part still washed
With dying thunders of the ebb. I know thee.
And he that gives himself to thee, must watch
His image in the variable cloud
Torn by the winds. I know it. But the name,
That is thy title, *shall* not come from me !”

Ælia was silent long ; amazed to hear
This truth she asked for come from him who loved.
She would have spoken then, maybe to plead,
Or maybe to disdain him ; with the wrath
Of angry beauty crush him.

He was gone !

All through the night she lay awake, until
The dusk-tipped wings of dawn had brought her
sleep ;
And then she dreamed by chance her face was changed,
She went unrecognized of kith and kin,
And when she cried that she was Ælia,
“The little Ælia, that untamed coquette,”
They scoffed, and frowned, and turned her from the
door.
Then sobbed she, “Bring me Dardagil ! O he,

He knows me well." And a strange woman said,
 "He cannot know thee, Dardagil is mine."
 Then fell she from the threshold screaming loud,—
 And found her maidens round her, and her pillow
 Wet with tears.

She rose, and all the day,
 And alway after, robed herself in sable.
 And then though Artim woo'd and chafed, and chafed
 And woo'd ; her heart was fain and fortress'd.

Strange,
 Full strange to change for one hard word, but now
 She only lived on hope and Dardagil.
 With heart and lips whose words were worth their
 kisses

Adoring the banished idol that she made.
 That stalwart form, those large fatigu'd eyes.
 And in her breast anon took sanctuary,
 And raised high convent walls of purity
 Around. Then, labour in despair, in vain
 The goodliest gifts were sent by Artim ; gems
 Hid deep in utmost eastward ocean
 Such as Venice even, she the jewell'd queen
 Of all the seas, scarce knew, and courtly maid
 Had coveted. But Ælia put them back,

These that once had been the beauty's armour,
As valueless :—that made her mother's eyes
Who brought these gifts, to shine so tenderly
On her (and them). For that Aelia of old,
Whom they were seeking, the proud coquette,
Lay at the bottom of her jewel-case
Like a dead turquoise.

Dardagil meanwhile

Bled unseen, like the root whose one sweet nower
Is plucked. And paced the hidden side of all
That Eastern splendour littered in the bright
Venetian, ways abruptly edged with shade
To hear each day from kith and kin (so kind),
Aye, even from the very gondoliers,
The clank that linked her name with Artim's.

Praying

With riven heart that *he*, this Artim, might
But love her well ; and had he even known
She loved him (pondering on that truth he said),
His higher knighthood held him mute : for self
Had passed away, and chivalry or fear
To hinder her from higher choice, held bound
His heart in realms beyond the easy ways
Of love with love returned, for he had cast

His bosom on the waters, or to love
And float, or love and die.

And all this while
Bright Tintoretto, with his god-like hand
Enriched these days, and all along the shade
The soft-eyed maids with hair our Titian loved
Bore wavering vases laughing to the wells.
And so the empty-handed Spring sailed by
In sable gondolas and crescent moons.

But thick-browed Artim, brooding on his schemes
To satiate a passion foiled, let not
The hours go unsown. He had a creature
Here, of one same mother born, who served him
Abjectly ; with whom in hours of play,
The eves of daily labour, for the State's
Behoof, the dark forethoughtful man would fence,
To keep his hand in for a sudden call,
And 'tween the passes would he rallyingly,
And with an indication of the steel,
Hint at grave deeds that *might* be done and should—
And then again on guard.

The high lamp's light
In Artim's palace, shown abroad o'er Venice,

Would often check the laughing gondoliers.
Returning from a festa it would make
The holy hush of still canal and square
Significant of evil. Heavenly night
In Venice shared the gaze of eager dame
And cavalier on that inscrutable
High lamp and lone. "What plots he now?" they
hint.

"And whom against?"

A gondola was framed
Even like a sister unto Aelia's own.
"And thou," said Artim to his brother, "Seek
This canzonetting boy on whom her soul
Is fixed. Say we brothers hate as brothers :
And you would be revenged through him on me ;
This well implied : then bring him where this boat,
Mysteriously closed, divides the ripples
As though from off Murano. Then, me he sees
Reclining in it like the lord of it,
My lady hidden. Dost thou mark me well?"

'Twas done : and soon the softly swerving lie,
As if from off Murano, in the crowd
Of muffled boats or gaily decked appeared

Athwart the golden waves by Dardagil,
And as he looked his heart leaped, for Artim
Sat therein !—

But Dardagil went on with talk
To Artim's brother carelessly, and said :
“How change sails on in Venice ! Here have I
But little time been absent, and 'tis robed
Anew.” But quick his trembling arm betrayed
The poison of the plot that worked in him
From head to heel ; each fibre of his heart
Grew marble, so that violence of will ;
His own true stern nobility alone—
Just held him on the crash of rage, that 'whelmed
Despair, and swayed him almost e'en to curse
At Ælia's name. “And yet, not this !” he said,
“I could have worn the crown of thorns, to know
This Artim loved—an' he but loved her well.”—
And then, with outstretched hands, as though to stem
Hot tears from teeth of fire, “His love is vile—
Would kill her.” Then suddenly—“Your brother
Has hurt you, cavalier. We follow him ;
The sore may spread too far.”

The brother fain
Had made him turn ; remembering how he once

For but a tiny word against her fame
Hurled huge Miguel, the very Doge's son,
There headlong in the Grand Canal. "But now,"
Low down within himself, unheard he said,
"Unnerved, he'll fall upon a practiced sword,
If haply sword-play issue of it." Grim
He eyed the chase, and on the marble steps
Of Artim's palace Dardagil sprung forth
To summon Artim. Courteously the two
Saluted, Artim smiling hard.

"Returned
To life?" he said. And Dardagil: "Or else
Embarked for death, or you!"—

"Is that a poem
In birth?" sneered Artim.

"My good sword may write
It on thy breast!" hurled fiercer Dardagil.
"Thy Muse a boy's untempered jealousy!"
Cried Artim.

Then Dardagil, his head erect
Once more: "I hardly heed your empty seats
Your gondola shows ill your craft! Not I,
'Tis thou art jealous here. I had thought more

Of Artim's jealousy. Swift jealousy !
Whose harsh hawk's eye is blind to all but blood,
And speaks not till 'tis done. Had I a right
To jealousy, I'd break thee as the wave
This brittle bark, and leave thee littered there
On Lido's shore till wind and wave had washed
The ugly stain away." Artim just held
His rage enough to say, "My lady bird
To the palace comes not yet ; I have dropped
Her dainty feet at home ; the world's tongue wags,
You know."

"Breathe not her name aloud, Seigneur,"
Said Dardagil. "We slash no lady's name,
We that are noble, with *our* meeting swords.
And pray you do not vex the truth with lies
And plots so low that serving fiends of hell
Would loathe them. See, the very gondola
Swings backward from your feet as though it
scorned

Incarnate liars ! Yet do I acknowledge
That you outstripped me in our race to-night,
And reached the palace first, as being your own
You well might do. Still I am discontent,
And smite you. Surely *this* is cause enough



For crossing swords, and who needs more—needs none.”

Then Artim's fury blazed ! * * *
 * * *

Night, with the star
 Of unvanquished will, frets the smooth-blown sands
 Of Lido's shore. Full soon 'twill flash the swords
 Of foes ; sparkling off their steel and the wave's
 Phosphoric lunging foam at intervals
 Against their footing.

Artim's mind was cool,
 For ne had seen his fever'd foe stoop down
 To cool his forehead in the sea : he knew
 Kind Fortune doth prefer the stronger hand,
 And felt it was his own.

Pale but elate,
 Dauntless stood Dardagil, his doublet off,
 The weird white moonlight on his open front,
 And on his well-squared breast and shoulders broad,
 His long bright rapier drawn, the point upon
 The ground, the cold light just warmed in his eyes,
 Just falling through his graceful lifted hair,
 His shadow at his feet. A long trailed star
 Fell swiftly then, and to his confidant

Said Dardagil, "I know the sign. I fight
For her, and fall for her, not me, God wot.—
By moonlit seas, and where she often comes,
With lights of Venice my beloved in sight,
That Aelia smiles upon. What more need I?
"Out upon her," cried his friend, "and wilt thou
So tamely die for her who used thee so?
I would that she were dead." Then Dardagil
Was wroth indeed. "Aye, though I died for her
An hundred times, an hundredfold am I
Her knight and slave right thankfully. Doth ev'n
The lion turn upon the lioness,
And shall man be less? I charge thee, see
Thou tell her not my end. Though Aelia's tears
Were Heaven to me, 'twere hell to have them fall,
Or know her bosom rose unevenly,
Even in Heaven. Do this, and only take
Her silent homage and my mute devoir;
Then make obeisance low as to the queen,
And let my love, not grievings and regrets,
Breathe out itself (if she should ask thee aught)
In this *last* dying sign."

He raised his rapier
From the pricked sand, and waited for his foe.

Then bright the four long sword-points glanced, and
left

The work of death with two.

There's something rare
In that first courtly altercation. Few
The thrusts at first, till Dardagil dropped blood.
This roused him, though at each new touch he
smiled,

And smiled more sharply. Artim pressed him hard,
Half in disdain ; and but for deadly ire
Had cast the now unskilled opponent off,
That could but break and foil, to bleed and live.
But deadly ire and thirst for triumph strung
His arm ; he pressed to seize the victory.
Gasping he stopped. Dardagil lowered his sword.
The guard was quick renewed in silence.—Thanks
For generous forbearance there were none.
More now in frantic malice Artim fought,
Until at last in miserable spite,
His rival to unnerve, he cried the name
Of Aelia.

“Aelia ! Let her not be named !”
Cried Dardagil, and swift with flashing feint
Pierced Artim through the breast.

The moon glanced pale
 Upon an upturned face, then hid her eyes,
 While Dardagil was hurried to the boats,
 With hollow sound of feet without the voices,
 And silence sailed with them across the sea.
 The wailing night-birds circled over it,
 Strange fogs rose foul and fell from out of it.
 Adrift on ghostly and forlorn lagoons
 The lonely heron watched them, and the birds
 Of reeds and rankest grasses rose in flocks
 Along that shore of idle ebb and ooze ;
 Until they reached the long gray line of land.

Ere in the east the night had bled, the news
 Had gathered tenfold bloodliness, and spread
 To Venice, of its statesman Artim *s'ain*,
 And his successor would not dry his tears
 (Poor man) until a price on Dardagil
 Was laid. And all the mainland round was searched.

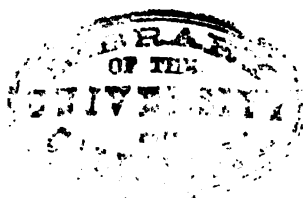
But if his enemy were dead indeed,
 Or if the gentle lady of his love,
 The once capricious Ælia, thought of him
 Still tenderly, he knew not—an exile ;
 Doomed by the rigid finger of the state.

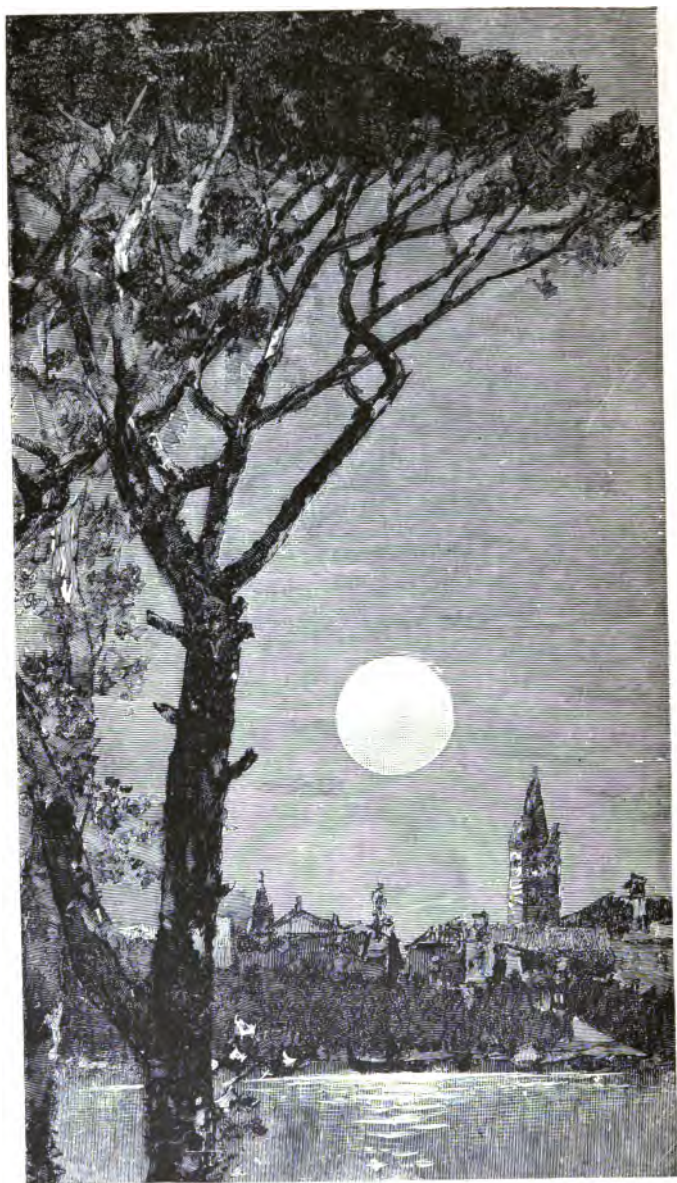
No! no ;—no balm now soothed Aelia's despair
Save healing others' woe. Her golden hair
She strewed along her shoulders heedlessly,
Moving through the palace pale and proud.
Ever with daily tears she spoke his name.
His name! Maybe the melancholy air
Might echo where he was, and bid her fly
To him, to be but near him, and be his.

*One moment, O pause there, and stay,
Dark clouds girt about the sweet sun,
You so crowd on him one by one ;
O! my love is craving, and none
Seem to heed me, mourning away !*

*Stay, stay, weeping waves of the main!
Sobbing sounds of lovers that mourn!
The wave that came up with the dawn,
And broke into smiles, is it gone?
Is there no returning again?*

*O Summer-day, why with eyes wet
Wilt close all the sweet lovers' hours?
'Tis but the month of the shadows and showers,
Of sweet crescent moons increasing the flowers,
Canst be for leaving us yet?*





*With a darkness where stars never come
The sun is eclipsed and accursed,
And the water that slaketh no thirst
From Hell's writhing ocean hath burst
With a fierce fringe of flame in the foam!*

Artim wounded, on Lido shore that night
Bled bitterly; but even in his trance
Of faintness, with a gleam of ruling craft,
Gasped, "Not Venice!" and while his brother's ear
Was bowed to him, commanded they should bear
By stealth his body to Murano's isle,
While solemn obsequies and published *death*
Of this Venetian crafty councillor
Brought execration on his rival's head,
And swift decrees of exile. All was done,
And hour by hour did Artim in his room
Of refuge in Murano fight with death.

Death wavered as to which one of the three
His hand should touch—or Artim on his bed,
Or Ælia bereft, or Dardagil
Condemned in exile. Death just poised his shaft
Between them, swerving heedlessly as though

'Twas hung aloft on the crook'd weathercock
Of the little Lombard tower of silent old
Murano's fisher church, while mass was said.
And hiding, Artim fought the slayer well—
Fought hand to hand in that small stealthy house,
And turned him to his purpose. Death drove out
His foe ; and when nigh spent he'd find a help
In thoughts of Aelia and her utter woe.

Remote in homeless lands the banished friend
Of Venice, Aelia's lover, lived within
Himself ; his body there, his soul across the earth.
A grief in sleep and waking !—Saw
The chill gray twilight of that morn he fled
Across the ghostly and forlorn lagoon
Where lone the heron watched him, and the birds
Of reeds and rankest grasses rose in flocks
Along the shore of idle ebb and ooze ;
Saw Venice dimly through his tears, as though
It loomed in rain and fog. And silent oft
As list'ning unto slips of angels' songs
That dropped about the earth unheard of men
Would look as wistful as an afternoon ;
And seem to strive to catch some spent refrain

Of bygone time, as village children do
At the dragged wheat-ears in the Autumn lanes
Where wains have passed.

A sorrow's song he made,
A song of gleanings when the fields are bare.

*There's the sunlight and the shadows and the changes
of the day,*

*And my love, my sunlight, now so changed, as sad as
it was gay ;*

*And my life—'tis but the gleanings of a life that's
burnt away.*

*Waiting, waiting with the clouds, in all the drowsy
amber sky,*

*The sun comes down to kiss them, in golden-veined
eternity ;*

*I alone am left, with ships and heavy hours sailing
by.*

*Gleaning, gleanings, could thy dream but glean one
thought of mine to-day,*

*One little word, you'd know it, and an angel as they
say*

*Might leave a chink above the clouds, I'd see through
far away.*

*So I wait through all the May-time, with its frail air
full of thee:*

*And flitting hopes like gossamers that seem to float
to me.*

And now we glean the faded flowers of fainted ecstasy.

*Yet 'tis sweet in happy hay-time with the buds all
waiting near,*

*To wait beneath the willows while the lily cups ap-
pear;*

*But 'tis hard to wait in Winter time, when a'l is dead
and drear.*

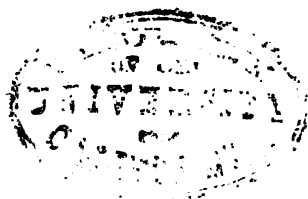
*When the Autumn dies of weeping, and the gleanings
tempests blow,*

*Gleaning hopes and latest leaves that fly, and fade
away and go!*

*Then I look for thee in Heaven; and it sends me
down the snow!*

We live but where the heart is; following fast
His songs in fancy, Dardagil no more
Could hold himself from Ælia;—gave she bliss,
The block, or oubliettes. . . .

In monkish garb,
Of dark Dominican, and cowed, he stole





Through Venice : and like steps upon his way,
The old familiar churches one by one
He entered, thinking " Here she is, and here—
Perhaps another's ! and in penitence ;
Perhaps beneath the stones dead, dead !"

He passed

The steps of shrines groove-worn by kneeling knees,
Quaint Lombard carvings loved of lovers too
(For there's a twilight haunts them), till he reached
A chapel bearing Artim's name. The walls,
The altar-table, were behung with wreaths,
Flowers, and *ex-votos* ; one—the centre one—
From Artim ! this was Artim's chapel !—this
Artim's thank-offering for life restored !—
That blazed the exile as a coward's ruse.

While Dardagil stood there in whirling doubt,
Half fathoming the cunning of the man
Of craft most fathomless, he heard a voice ;
Whose rich contralto tones struck him to stone.
Low wailed the voice, " Sweet Maddalena loved ;
Dear mother of repenting ! Madeleine !
Too much, maybe, to see him and be loved ;
But thou couldst love as none have loved on earth,

And look for love, *but* love, to ransom thee.
I too have Tintoretto-hair like thee,
And surely thou wilt hear my wail, when I
Renounce myself to live in him I love,
If yet he lives!—if yet he lives! But once
To lift my lips to his; say, 'I repent,'
Say, 'I am changed—changed wholly by that love
So high and passing sweet he gave me once':
And then, O Maddalena! up to thine,
With thee and thine to look on him from heaven!
For I must die. I cannot yield my hand
To Artim, he that hounds me; and my kin
Help him, O Maddalena, and he strives,
And living I am weak, and dying strong,
And so, sweet Maddalena, let me come!"

Her lover now had sunk upon his knees,
Thrilled by the voice to ecstasy, and by all
That bitter wail whose lifted tones unveiled
Her love; unmanned a space. 'Twas, O so sweet
To hear; so strange, un hoped; her presence seemed
A spirit in the gloom, that spoke with Heaven;
And awed, he wrapped his head till she might fade
Like some mute after-rapture of a prayer.—

She rose, and saw the well-knit monk that knelt.
And lest she should disturb *him*; softly left
Her wonted altar. Then recovering, he
Looked up, as from a trance, and there was heard
Low talk—in which a man's harsh tongue pronounced
Her lover's name. Great God! 'twas Artim's voice.
Near stunned, "Aelia!" he cried; flung off his cowl,
And called her to him, challenged Artim turn;
On his life to turn! Flew the dim aisle's length,
Where Artim dragged faint Aelia to the porch.
'Twas but a flash, before a devil's laugh,
One shriek, one flicker of a flying veil,
And then the door with crashing thunder closed.
When Dardagil was master of himself,
From all the maddening of that moment past,
The echoes of the roar that rolled all round
And round this prison-house were settling high
In carven roof.

 An oriel window shone,
And set a laughing light upon a tomb.
He gazed at it right steadfastly. "For there
The way must be!"

 As swift he climbed, he caught
Now demon's head and ears, now angel's wing,

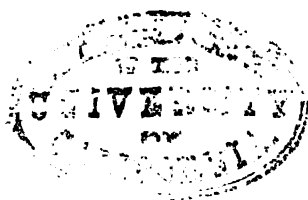
Now bat-like battling on the wall a space,
 Now swinging pendent ; daringly at last
 Scaling the aperture, and straining through,
 He drew his girdle tight ; and heeding not
 Or height or depth, he stood erect, and sprang.

Below him flowed the dark canal.

“ A sword !”

He shouted, as from out the heedless tide
 He lay upon a barcarolo's breast.
 And picked in haste some men of these and cried,
 “ A sword, and to Lord Artim's house, and quick !”
 These sons of Venice knew in that monk's garb
 A gallant of the city. One even sang
 A song of Dardagil's : “ *Sword, sword.*” It ran,
 “ *O sword, be true, and bright and true and swift
 For ladies sweet, and hearts, be true as steel.*”
 And then the end, all writ that time
 When he but hoped to meet his love on high.

*Yet our hearts in the land beyond parting
 Shall meet in the closes of rest,
 And be laid in the wings of an angel,
 And beat in the selfsame breas.*





Beneath their oars the barca plunged and flew,
 And on the wave they gave to him the steel
 For prompt affairs. Now nearing, he beheld
 A boat already crouching 'neath an arch
 Of Artim's palace. Then he cried : "Good friends,
 I am that Dardagil, and come to save
 A noble maiden ; see me not outmatched."
 The secret archway's bolts borne down with blows,
 And fighting every inch, and Dardagil
 With reddening sword to lead and cheer them on,
 At last to Artim's chamber burst the men.
 But Ælia had been hidden in the midst
 Of this his palace, vast as ancient fort,
 Immured in some high lodgement that a spring
 Touched light would whirl to unknown depths with all
 Therein. Such outrage to the maiden's kin
 Were naught to one so high in Venice then,
 And he could hold her, while his foe, and dupe,
 Remained outwitted and condemned beneath
 The sentence of the State. But seeing now
 The hated face between him and his prize—
 The face he thought all barred by iron laws—
 Fierce Artim stood aghast. Then they seized him
 In a flash : and Ælia found at last, she flung

Herself on Dardagil's good arm and cried :
"The traitor is betrayed. Death he may deal.
But never can he claim me of my friends,
Who thus dishonours them. We're free to-day,
O Dardagil, my love ! My saviour now ;
These palace walls shall hold me not alive."

Artim made one rush—
His last !—held tightly as he was ; his men
Had fallen, and the barcarolo bent
To whisper then to Dardagil : "Escape .
If but he stamp his foot, more minions mount
From under. Most we've spitted ; let them writhe."

Then Dardagil took Aelia 'neath his sword
And led her toward the gondolas. "Long life,"
He laughed. "Long life to you, my brave Seigneur."
His long bright rapier swinging on his hip,
"The lady Aelia's palace, an she will,
Shall be our meeting-place.

The past is writ
In water, but the present writ in blood.
Your life is much to me, for I love home,
And you alive, I have a home in Venice."

There's oft one ray that dances on a wall,
Of sunny wavelets born upon the deep
Canal where'er 'tis kissed by vagrant airs
Or gondola or barca swaying on.
And idle boatmen watch it, maidens too,
And children laugh at it, and mothers oft
Will show it to their sucklings till they crow.
It quivers up bright Ælia's balcony,
Fantastic as a spirit, aye, the sprite
Of human joy that makes the favouring sky
To beam on circumstance : O waters sweet
Of lovers' dreams ! And still the heart of love
Than sea-wave deeper is, and than sunlight
Even brighter is, nor has its ecstasy
One word of speech. But every sunlit wave
In Venice seems to send a leaping beam
To quiver up the balcony to them
And bliss sailed in with it upon the wind
Without one cloud to carry all across
The Lombard sky, and both were mute, too blest
For words to whisper e'en each other's names.
Ælia and Dardagil and western sky
Sinking like the very raptured silent sun
Itself in closing Heavens, heart in heart,
Rapt hand in hand, eyes trembling up to eyes.

AT THE EMBASSY.

Paris.

OF all the Paris season's gayest balls, the Embassy was the most superbly brilliant last night. Below, the waltzes, youth, age, dullness, wit, love, bliss and anguish, seemed speaking all their different languages, in every tongue. Near a tottering diplomat and an intriguing ancient Duchess, stood a lovely young girl with a distinguished-looking man, somewhat her elder, evidently of a different nationality. They were beneath the tall domes of the conservatory, just where the sumptuous glow and music came faintly 'neath the still stately tropic leaves. She seemed rooted there, with all her love in her half-closed lips, like some twining-plant with a thousand sweet buds waiting but one warm May morning to burst into bloom and turn that longed-for dawn into a thousand petaled rays and hues.—He had come there at last with strength enough to tell her they never more must meet. Kinder for these two were the chilliest northern blast than this soft searching music, for they had each in different directions glided on the fatal highroad of love, whence is no return : that long pathway that crumbles away behind the steps of all who travel it.—It was coming, that fearful farewell to lips which never should have met, and shall meet no more save on the trackway to Heaven that is beat by the feet of the dead.

It was the last ball there—

Au Ministère des Affaires Etrangères !

They were near to a serre,

On sait si bien les faire,

Il faisait bon in the laden air.

Auburn—more than auburn was her hair.

Nothing is more loving than the entreaty of her gaze,
No lily on a tendril more tender than her grace,
Than he, no one more stricken, such a sadness on his
face.

They silently lingered together
Until the waltz began,
Then won by the ways of the measure
Thus a whisper ran.

You know not what you're asking, O saintly little
maid,
Innocent and beautiful indeed !
They know not what they're asking, those longing
hazel eyes ;
All that a glance in a glance can read—
The idyll of a soul in a sweet parenthesis.

I envy the confusion of your heart's convulsive thrill,
Sa tendresse qui tressaille—its deep, its mute reproach.
I'd gladly weep with tears like yours because *I* can't
reveal
A secret like your secret, that so throbs at my ap-
proach,
And covet even more than you the love I cannot feel.

You say you'd pardon all my faults, your love would
never swerve.

O white soul swimming swan-like on the stream of
destiny,

That sings so sweet, yet only feels its voice that it
may die,

Vous préchez un converti.— Yes! a life without a love
Is like a magic lantern without a light to me.

But the curse my kiss would give you would be worse
than you can think.

Thrilled like water in a vase wherein we drop a drop
of ink.

Aye, *your* love breathes like Springtide on the full
redundant lands,

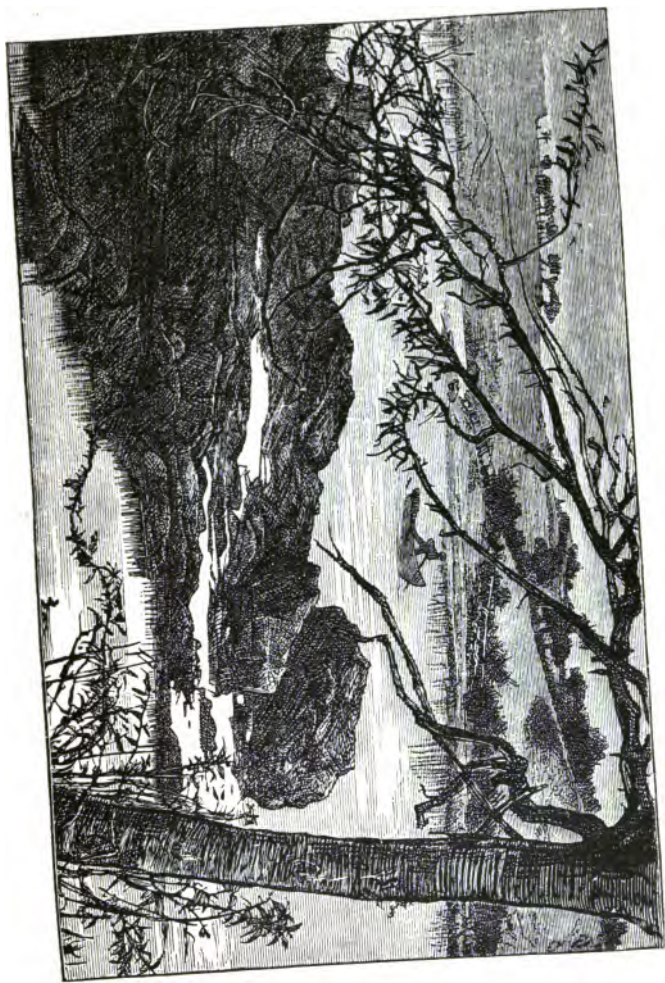
And when we watch the wild flowers in little chil-
dren's hands.

Mine but shames the shabby Winter ; with each new
life it gives,

Like a land of little Summer in the sun without the
leaves.

There waits a cruel woman near to whom *my* being
clings,

With a gorgeous Eastern beauty : with arms that
spread like wings,





In which I fly to endless realms that live but in my
brain—

To heavens full of emptiness I search and search
again !

You—you long to give me life, and yet, I breathe
but in her gaze,

And she battens my ambition on the leaven of her
praise ;

I clamber at a will-o'-the-wisp like squirrels in a cage.

I've a habit now of loving her—un fatal sortilège.

Ses moindres petits riens si beaux ; my own eyes
plead for her,

And make me think her charming ruse, la haute école
du cœur.

I've sold her all my footsteps, and the secret of her
spell

She closes with her eyelids, and surrounds it with
her smile.

Même mon salut éternel at her proud feet is lain,

I know 'tis but Eternity can give it back again.

Sweet poisons scent her ambient tress, her sighs, her
witching web,

And the flood whirls on the flow'rs till they're stranded
at the ebb—

No ! lift no eyes that speak so much ! asking up to
me,
Who would not dare to kiss your hand e'en on bended
knee ;
But I wring *my* hands and look to you, like sinners
out of Hell,
For you've raised my soul sufficiently to say to you—
farewell !

A WARM NOVEMBER DAY.

Tuilleries Gardens.

Aye ! when it is fine in November,
All Summer seems coming again,
And the lips that we love and remember
Seem to kiss us for joy—and for pain.
But pain, O, sweet with emotion,
And sunshine so brimful of words,
It could give the wild waves of mid-ocean,
The voice in the breasts of the birds
Aye ! when it is bright in November,
I see thee, adore thee,—with pain ;
Like the sun that alights on an ember,
And burns it to glory again.





For thine will the first of all faces,
To come in the manifold years,
Like the flowers that bloom in the places
That angels have watered with tears.

FAIR AMSTEL.

The River of Amsterdam.

SWEET Amstel though I sing, the song is thine,
For I but give thee back thine own words hid
Within thy bosom, while with queenly pace
And pause, like some fair vestal's footstep slow,
Thou near'st the sea thy sons have swayed so long.
A babbling brooklet on the lee makes more
Ado than thou on whose broad breast, as kind
As sleep in gentle Summer air, have passed
The riches of the East, and sea-gulls rest
Their weary wings with me, a wanderer too.
Thy lands taught Peter to be Great, and all
Thy people courtesy. In sooth thy tongue
Seems tuned alone to tell the idyl fair
That surely sits on every maiden's brow,
As on thy fields the raiment of content.

Aye ! let none other call the cattle home,
 But make "Je maintiendrai," "J'ai maintenu !"
 And that shall tell the Teuton and the Gaul
 In accents bold well earned in wars. That e'en
 In peace you still invade the very sea,
 And bid the Ocean pause ! . . And yet although
 In Chatham with your sword you thrust us far
 More deep than all ; now, that regained, I swear
 Within our hearts you pierce us deeper still
 With all your winning ways.

A LOST SOUL.

*So long ago we do not know,
 But either he or she died unshriven.*

WHAT matters it that one life be lost ?
 That overcast with tears,
 And tempest-tost
 It fall, through endless years,
 And flicker out and die,
 Like one more day from out the sky.

* * * * *





What matters it ?

 If one great grief

 Or sweet belief,

Remorseless shatters it,

Relentless scatters it

 Vertiginous through space.

 And there, with its wrecked sweet face

Cast down, like some drooped rose,

Fleeter than April rain it goes,

Painfully its dead blush veiling,

 Through the endless spheres 'tis sailing,

 Down from its high, bright pedestal in air

To unvoiced depths of great despair.

 What matters it ?

Yet *doth* it fade without one word

Said aloud, like some pink cloud

 From out the fair

Unfurrowed face of Heaven

Some still even,—

 And leaving there,

No ! naught recorded ?—

Naught save the unclouded,

 Unfurrowed face of Heaven,

 Just as even

 And as fair.

No spell broken,
No weird token,
Strange and mute and faint and undefined,
To the wordless reapers of the wind,
Speaking o'er earth of her. Forgot.
In some strange tongue earth knoweth not
None here praying
Or interceding :
On earth to others pleading,
By just saying :
" You never knew,
The devil tempt you :
Placing eternity
Slyly and furtively,
Like a watching cheat,
Against some sweet infirmity,
Twixt pace and pause of your unwayward
feet."

Naught on the fair unfurrowed face of Heaven,
Or dome on dome encircling into space, that even.—
Deep in the eternal mystery
Of the endless air.
Far and farther, filmier and more fair ;





Nothing written there,
Not even one lightning thrill or momentary
spot ;
While the Past saith to the Is to be :
"It matters not ! . . . It matters not i"

ANDREVUOLA.

. . . . "And thus, Alastair, severed from Andrevuola, his love, wandered westward, grieving ever, and crossed the ocean, and one calm Autumn morning reached Niagara. Through the wistful stillness now all the past came back."

*Part of a tale improvised by the author for
Lord Beaconsfield.*

I KNOW ;—thou'rt Autumn ; silent,—still,
But O too full of songs that fill
My soul with sighs, and make me hear
Sweet words said earlier in the year.
I thrill with pain, yet *seek* one dear
Lost loved low voice. And gone hands near
My yearning hands, with one more tear
Our Summer knew not, ling'ring here,
One foot on earth and one on High,
To kiss a long, long, last good-by,
And smile across the hemisphere.

I kept thee from me till to-day ;
And hid my love and pain !—But each ray
To-day hath such a wistful glow,
The half-dead flowers do not know

If they're to fade, or once more blow.

And O my heart *will* overflow,

And beats the cruel bars ! Although

Sometimes,—I thought thou wert—who knows?—

As hollow-bosomed as a rose,

But what of that ? I loved thee so !

And I *do* hope that where thou art,

No day like this will rouse thy heart,—

Because to-day on land and lee,

The cricket trilleth, and the bee

Goes once more forth ; and leaf and tree

Wave once again, and they and we

Hold out our arms, and long to see

Some far-off land that is to be.

And all whose sorrows sleep will wake

And feel their hearts must speak or break,

And this will make thee think of me.

I kept thee from me till to-day,

But now 'tis bright as 'twas in May ;

And surely once my heart and I

May speak out once ; with one wild cry.

Of all its tears, ere the day go by,

Just cherish one, till we know why



The earth hath speech, and stars on high
Look down on us so mournfully.

The whole wide world would love to-day !
We think the thoughts no words can say,
No wind in Heaven drive away,
And think how far from thee am I.

I kept thee from me !—and to-day
Just one sweet morn will come and say :
“Not all Niagara with its roar
Can still my heart. My love ! no more
Than seas can part us, though they tore
The earth in twain.” Though I implore
My soul to stay, ’tween shore and shore
’Twill waver till it wanders o’er.

For my love’s secret hymn lies furled
In each dead leaf o’er all the world !—
And I shall see thee never more !

What dost thou mean, thou “Never more” ?
Dost mean, that we from shore to shore
In myriad worlds we see in dreams
Shall float, and seek, and find no gleams
Of hope ? No sight of her who seems
On earth our only life ? That streams

Shall pass to rivers in the beams
Of future suns in wild extremes,
Of utmost azure, there to greet
An endless sea?—But to thy feet
That I shall come, no nevermore?

That not in all the countless years,
In the fastnesses of future spheres
Our souls shall touch? Like some great bell
Whose sound is tolled,—'tis done! Not hell
Nor Heaven shall hear again. None tell
The words that far too sweetly fell
Upon our ears, and said too well
The love they sealed in one farewell.
And not in all the endless space,
My face shall ever meet thy face,
Nor pass the place where it shall dwell.

That all our love shall be as naught
My brain goes reeling with the thought!—
In mighty, far-off, filmy skies,
Fair clouds will roll;—and red suns rise
To glow new morns, whose radiant eyes
Will melt at eve. Sweet majesties
And angels in grand galaxies

Will crowd the seventh Paradise.

And no great tide, no heavenly sea,

Will ever float thee near to me,

Through all the vast eternities ! !

UNE FÊTE SANS ELLE.

À LA DUCHESSE DE V—.

HIER soir chez un seigneur tout Paris en nombre
 Fut réuni par lui pour un joyeux repas ;
 Mais moi je vous cherchais, me refoulant dans l'ombre.
 Car je *senta*s bientôt que vous n'en étiez pas.

Oui d'autres ont aussi les couleurs de l'aurore,
 Un sourire enchanteur, un rayon triste et doux :
 Vous avez tout cela ; mais vous avez encore
 Un charme plus puissant qui n'appartient qu'à
 vous.

Vous avez cette grâce, d'un naïf ineffable,
 Et que possède seul le parfum d'une fleur.
 Votre regard est doux, et sa puissance aimable
 Dévoile les trésors que cache votre cœur.

Ah ! que n'étiez-vous là, quand j'errais en délire
Et que mon âme, hélas ! épuisait sa douleur !
Mais vous ne savez pas jusqu'où va votre empire :
J'ai peur de mon amour, j'ai peur de vous—
J'ai peur !

* * * * *

Car il suffit pour me désarmer
D'un seul baiser de tes lèvres en flamme,
Ton âme a pris toute mon âme
Je t'aime et ne veux que t'aimer.

THE CHOICE OF ARMS.

BIARRITZ.

The choice of arms is given to the one insulted or injured.
COLONNA.

*A Paraphrased Sketch of a Poem, originally written in French by
the Author for Recitation.*

*I stand before the judgment throne of Heaven,
'Mid rays of angels glowed in strange white light
Beyond. Erect, and fearing less, O God,
Thy wrath than Thy great love! I tell the tale
Beneath its record held 'tween Heavenly wings.*

* * * * *

They told me Maud, my Love, my Maud, was false.
I thought it *once* ; since Love and Fear are twins :
And yet one word from her, one soft pained look
On my transcendent agony healed all.
It is so sweet to trust the lips we love.

But I met *him* who wrought the ill. His eyes
Met mine. He knew their tiger's turn ;
Saw me impelled towards him sideways like a cat,
And squared his well-knit frame right skillfully

To stop my hand. It would have bitten tight,
And held like leopard's teeth.—I stopped my rush !
Near fell in staying it ! held by the thought
That Maud's fair name and fame must not flash out
Between our meeting swords. He also saw
I would have hurled him from the jetty there,
And gone with him straight down and through the
sea

That raved like burning fringe of hell. Aye ! on
To hell itself, till there my claw burned off
His throat. But then he knew, before the world,
I *must* find pretext foreign to her name.
This saved him. Then he planned it quick. . . We both
Were skilled in arms, but he, renowned for fence,
Well knew, *l'arme blanche* was rarely to my hand
Of late. So when the pretext came, too soon
For thought, and stung my strained and pregnant
skin ;

Out flew my blow and down he went, and thus
Made me aggressor, leaving him to choose
For swords, and though he knew me wounded twice
With these, and knew my prior cause to make
Demur, he felt that I would fight this night
With earthquakes like the gods, or throw the dice

For my own mother's soul. And so he gained
And chose, though he first having wrought the ill
About her name, the choice of arms by right
Was mine.

Well! He was first upon the ground.
Stalwart, fierce, and pale, in the uncanny light
Of dawn. No sweet and heavy southern sun
Peeped sily t'ward the glamoured crescent faint
In Eastern spheres; but he stood like some great ghost,
The youth all faded from his face as hath
The green from Autumn leaves.

The night below
Rolled sulkily away, ashamed to shew
Such sodden sky with one red stain across
For morning.

Ominously I felt the knife,
With which my second clipped my shirt-sleeve round,
Had slipped and cut my arm. And so I held
My rapier crosswise just a moment up
Against the storm cloud couchant in the wind
Before we made salute. I knew full well
His steel's strong clink meant more than skill, but
dared
The death. I liked the weighting of my blade.

And taste the breath of the affected calm
Of that first courtly altercation.

When each man measures each, and but an inch
Would end the pointed courtesy. His choice
Was right, and nerved his arm. A good square foot
Must measure all my fleury's deviation
For my guard ; till "*feinte en tierce dégement leste*
En quarte" might give me *one* small chance for life.

Straight for my heart he went. At each riposte
He pressed me harder still. I still fought on,
Although he saw how spent I grew. So faint
Each fresh assault her face came in a dream.—
Crash burst the thunder and the flash. And rain
And tears almost seemed mixed with drops which
streamed

From both our brows. Straining, though all but killed,
And harder pressed : I seemed to draw in dreams
Her features fair with each cramped guard against
The insolence of that white tongue of fire,
That ever darted at my face and breast
As though the devil laughed above the storm.

At last a pause.—'Twas well : for my breath passed
At most my throat. "On guard !" Again. This time

On guard for death. In the storm's dim wicked light
 I swear his sword clipt mine before the word.
 'Twas worse than foul, his "*coup de temps*"
 Too swift ! So faint was I that in a flash
 They saw his point appear right through my shirt.
 "He's killed !" they cried. "Aye ! killed be damned !"
 cried I :

And quick ;—full four feet back ; before my foe
 Recovered half a span (for he had missed) :
 With "*feinte en tierce dégagement vite en quarte*,"
 With crash and flash as though all Heaven fell,
 I felt my rapier pierce that traitor wrist
 And iron arm, and shoulder-blade. And flung
 It to the earth. "Saved, saved !" my second cried,
 "*En quarte basse !*"*

 Yes, saved ! And now they say,
 He's dying, may be dead.—More blest than I
 He lies all shriven in his chambers grand,
 Alight with mystic flames of gentle rite
 About his head. The anthem for his soul

* The words "*En quarte basse*," which are, perhaps, too technical for recitation, may be changed to the words "And crossed the ground" for those amongst an audience who are not adepts in fencing.



All faintly floating round. And she who loves
The well-knit Count forgives him all his faults,
I too ; except his rest, and that he fenced
So ill—he missed my heart : For I am sick
Of all the gaping world's afflictive crew,
And sooner far were on that road to rest
With her I love to smooth my closing eyes.

*DURANTE LA VALSA.**(Andante.)*

O STRIVE to keep silent, my breaking heart,
 And keep back your tears if you can ;
 She will see, as we dance and we laugh, that thou art
 But the pulse of a dying man.
 My spirit, my soul, O let her not see,
 Are hung in a look, in a sound—
 That her silvery smiles are passing through me
 Near by as she gives them around.

Yet maybe she knows
 My heart was the rose
 That now in her bosom is lain :
 Each scent that it gives
 Is a life in its leaves,
 That never will open again.

She'll hear all my words you murmur so low

O monodies maddening sweet ;

I shall faint with her form in my arms as ye flow,

And die of my love at her feet.

Yes, die with my love untold on my lips,

Yet press her but once to my breast,

In the light and perfume, till the melody steeps

My life in its languorous rest.

For she knows, she knows

My heart was the rose

She chose from the tree to be slain.

Each breath it receives

Is a death in its leaves,

That never will blossom again.

* * * * *

(Diminuendo.)

She knows that my heart's last fibres

In her gaze are giving way,

Like the pent-up soul of Winter

At the trembling breath of May ;

Like the sicklied hue of heaven

At the kindling kiss of day.

THREE MARBLE STEPS.

*Come d'autunno si levan le
foglie,
L'una appresso dell'altra, infin
che l'ramo,
Rende alla terra tutte sue
spoglie.*

DANTE.

If they should come to thee, those gentler tears

Our memory holds to keep the old days green,
And our first kisses, through the empty years,—
Remember when these lips are dead,
Full tenfold more than the love they said,
Burned in the heart that fed and died

On the gentle sweet curse they placed therein.
There's one wish left of the threnody
And tender dream-like devilry.

A wish—a weird travail of bitterest woe.
That near one door of the palace, where thou

And the courtiers' ladies often would come,
Should be three marble steps. And that I,
All shriven for rest, aye rest ! as I lie,

With my songs for pillow, might know my form

By that Eastern avatar after death,
Would change into them, as I sleep beneath.—
Sweet death can much that life cannot,
And thou would'st be often there near the spot .
 And I would be,
Three marble steps, just made for thee.

Three marble steps in the morning light :
The first the pale rose of pink roses .
 And one as pale as the flight
Of the rose from the brow of a maiden
 At touch of love, and as white.
And one as pure as the passionate
Azure and pearl of the night.

Three marble steps, there in my own France,
In that mignon palace where that shattered lance
Which you and I remember is ranged among the
 rest,
His who rode so proudly for that favour in his
 crest.

Three marble steps for love ;
Like love, too sweet and smooth above
 For the bitter hid below ;

Just placed where you, half dreaming still
From having slept,
Might stray toward the terrace at your will :
And though you slept
As light as leaves in Valombrosa, I should know
Whene'er the little feet would come and go,
Or pause in flitting to and fro.

Three marble steps. And I would be
Between the north towers' majesty
And the grand terrace, placed just where
The peacocks come above the lawn,
Where the knights come courting the ladies there,
And the black thrush trims his wing at dawn.
I too would wake beneath the sweet
Soft sound of a rondel of Vaucluse,
And gentle press of the dainty feet,
That fretfully patter their dainty shoes.

Three marble steps : where the noon all gay,
With the butterfly's phantom shadow would play,
On the broad warm beam of a midsummer's day.
And where, perchance, if a flower should grow,
They might heed it not, but leave it to blow

Just for a season, until in the snow

The three marble steps in the drift and sleet
Are chilled in the chime of a New Year's eve.
With the lovers so long in taking their leave,
That they cover my heart with the prints of their
feet.

Three marble steps. With the golden day
Faint in the breath of the vespers ; floating away,
'Mid aves and hymns and the blest
Hid bells of anthems : filling the air
With a fugitive music, the songs that give rest :
With the pulse of life lulling its throb with prayer.

Three marble steps later, with night in the spell,
Lagging in cloudland, pausing in air,
Weaving white webs in her chariot wheel,
And telling her stories to listeners there.
Thou, too, at thy threshold might enter not
But linger there likewise—hallow the spot
Where the moonlight could trace thee my form
as I lie
At thy feet : with my soul drawn down from the sky,
Or in dew across fairy lawns tree unto tree
Could weave my dead spirit in silver for thee.

THREE MARBLE STEPS.

79

Aye, then I could feel—I know I could feel—
Your white fingers coming ; should they once steal
 Toward my dead heart that would quicken and
 glow,
Should you bend down to the three marble steps,
And take your dear name from off my white lips,
 And write it for once on my brow.



*DAILY BREAD.**Panem nostrum superstantialem da nobis hodie.*

ST. JEROME.

AND thus do many to live and eat,
 Men garnering crime, as we gather in wheat.
 They clamour to kiss the foulest of feet,
 They have made their shirts of a dead man's sheet,
 And slandered the corpse as they fled.
 Flourished their pharisee's canting and cry,
 Fattened with priests on the God they belie,
 Fawned to the vice of the rich or the high,
 Foisted their daughters on whoso will buy,
 And gained but a bare daily bread.

A woman dead ??—With the law for the poor ?
 What, stiffened and propped up against the door ?
 Her eyes on the infant her head hangs o'er ?
 The stain of her tears on its pinafore ?
 Her arms still clinging,—dead ?
 Has fervid mauve and rich crisp lawn
 Passed and passed, and not heard her moan

For grief's bare durance, food alone?

O, food to give her little one !

A mother's cry for bread !

Mines of misery lie untold

Of withered souls whose sighs were gold,

Who sang of love and died of cold

With rich-clothed thoughts ; whose clothing told

The dirge of hunger's dread :

Whose inspiration's brightest heat,

And soaring dreams that sang so sweet,

Like wounded birds dropped down to greet

Grim fears of having bread to eat —

O ! horrid daily bread !

Yet songs in proud enchanting strain

Still upward rise from beds of pain,

And cruel jests, against the grain,

Like drunken grief that reels again.

Can grim grotesque exceed

The painter rising from his dream

Of fruitful vale, and laughing stream,

Whose brush would now revive some gleam

Of boyhood's dawn—without a beam

Of hope for daily bread ?

A blackness shrouds the flood, the bark,
And all the frozen city stark,
While voiceless steps infest the dark,
Hail ! now start up in bed, and hark !

That angry stealthy tread !
The phantom "Want," whose touch is blight,
She stalks the cursed streets to-night,
And claps her wings in haggard fright,
And shrieks, with all her hoarded might,
A haunting cry for bread !

Who passes on the midnight tide ? *
That seems with gloaming ghosts allied,
And peers through fog, as though he spied
For one that doth too deeply hide ?
The fisher of the dead !

Too often is his labour crowned :
All night for bread they're found and drowned
With bread, and Death his boat swings round,
His children yearn for corpses owned :
For they are "daily bread."

** Charles Dickens frequently refers to this ghastly calling of seeking by night on the Thames for the river's dead.*

Near! in the gas, lost women crowd,
With reeking jokes and laughter loud.
Leaping and dancing on the shroud
That Death is spreading sly and proud,
Beneath the loathsome bed.

Aye! drug the cup that else would craze,
The fulsome breath, the poisoned praise,
The sickening kiss of him who pays
Then Hell itself unveils and says,
Ha! ha! I'm daily bread!!

A DREAM-PICTURE.

I LIVED with my love in the cities that lie
In a cloud above all these clouds in the sky.
In a dream above all our dreams. Melody
And God's unseen banners, with their Eastern dye,
Sank round great hanging domes ; till veined porphyry
Was opal with dawn in these fields on high,
Where the flowers were souls of old songs gone by.
And hung like the lilies in lakes, just below,
The crescent moon passed, and the stars seemed to flow
To a music of kisses—kisses whose power
Shall make all Eternity in love with an hour.
And we sat with the white palace portals ajar,
And as thence I looked forth I could see so far—
For ever and for ever !

*ASPETTANDO.**

SOSPIRANDO ; chieggo invano

Fra i mortali il bene amato :

Mel rapiva ingiusto fato

Ai trasporti dell' amor.

Ed ahimè, son sempre solo,

Langue l'alma, e piange il cor ! . . .

Aspettando vien l'Autunno

Ed il crudo verno appresso :

Ahi ! dal duol trafitto, oppresso,

Resto al pianto in abandon—

E piangendo il tempo vola,

Non ritorna ; e mesta io son !

*No. 6 of the *Series for Music*.

DRIFTING.

*"Les souvenirs sont écrits dans les mers, et
la marée basse les emporte au diable.*

I READ once some song, writ in a boat, in marvellous
Soft air of Naples. Sweet from some heart, right
glorious,
Tuned by the gentle grape-flower time, when in loving
Spring
E'en heaven and earth touch lips for very joy, and sing.
I am nearly sure they naively called their sweet strain,
"Drifting."
They were four, I think, for some half-day their eyes
uplifting
T'ward too sweet Naples' skies, with Ischia and the
bay
And Capri:—capable to hold them half a day.
They were sweet singers who had left their wonted
thrift,
And for one noon maybe they thought they *were*
adrift,

Aye, one would think—to hear them apostrophize their
jaunt,

They drifted ever, from Hades to the Hellespont;
Although they know the waves that rock them, gently
flowing,

Will take them quite exactly where they know they're
going.

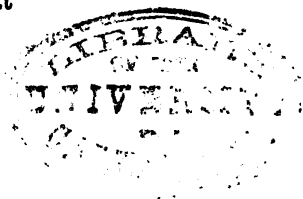
And they have also learnt the sea's depth under them
as well,

While wantonly they "Dip their reckless hands within
the swell."

Aye; even better than Vesuvian boatmen they know
The specific gravity of that near-by volcano;
Until, with mellowing shadows, these gentle dilettanti
Grow quite *antichi* with lagrima and chianti.

Yes! Sail on; your hands within the swell, one day,
And call it "Drifting." Ah! you know not what you
say.

You take the first, first fragile boat,
And drift: drift rudderless; afloat
On life's mad boiling river,
Be it Styx or Guadalquivir.
Drift first wildly, in the fashion



Of youth's imperious passion.
Heedless, as the fairies of the golden bough.
Blind ; with unsung songs fretting heart and
brow,
Now coursing careless and intrepid
Some chaotic, whirling rapid,—
And floating now through blossomed intimate sweet
closes,
With the spikenard, sendaline, terebinth, and roses,
All catching perfumes to-and-fro beneath the trailing
trees,
Frail and fragrant on the fluctuant fluting of the
breeze ;
With that sweet queen of the silver bow.—Drifting
through the place,
While the blooms are falling gently on your lips and
face :
Until some tide hath caught you, and an Ocean
Spreads before you. Then, heedless if the motion
Be held by hands of Heaven or Hell,
You dip your passioned *lips* into the swell.
Dead, from having lived a lifetime in an hour.
The palace of some glorious error.
Drinking the waves with their hard bitter power,

Till seas well up whose nectar is of tears ;
 Evil and of unquenched thirst, through endless years.
 Then still drift—knowing you are lost from *having*
 drifted.

Lost maybe the easier from being over gifted.

Drowning and drifting because heaven's blue

Hath over much inebriated you.

Living and loving while all through the soul of France
 Christ and Sappho and Polichinelle wildly lead the
 dance.

And even *there*,—true to some Quixotic unsaid vow
 grown old

And useless as the poppies in the field, that hold
 Their heads up by the will of God and light of
 heaven alone,

You feel your soul filled with the daring that would
 bid the sun

To pause, and grasp the vast charged pendulum of
 the universe

And bid it stay.—Then having drank all,—all the per-
 fumed curse,

You drift alone, with troughs of sea high round your
 little boat,

And claws of twenty winds all catching at your throat.

Only your own strong arm against the storm-built
cloud,

Yet sending up a glance as lurid and as proud
As Heaven to Earth. Enchanted with the thrall,
As dark as Hecate's bosom, and o'er it all
E'en Lesbos' air grown salt and angry, as 'twould
divide

Thetis again, and whirl her God once more beyond the
tide.

Saying of prudence, We forget it,
If it lead us to perdition, let it.

Drift! And whate'er there be to win, disdain it,
And all of safe and sleek reward ; disclaim it.
Drawn past Charybdis—on to Naxos where Ariadne
wailing,

Should have wrecked the heart of earth. There hail-
ing

The soul of Musset or Theocritus, and all the lost.
And even then, nigh drowned and tempest tost,
And wrecked and wracked, and having learnt no tamer
thought,

Nor worldly lesson it should have taught.

You have kept your unchained spirit all this while
So gentle that— Stay! One woman's smile

Would send you seeking once again the pure no-
blesse

That crowns at last the too great flow of wild ivresse.
Seeking like heedless knights the grief that kills some
other,

The childless father of the orphan, sorrow's brother,
And with some long sacrifice uncomplaining,
Gently, proudly, mutely training

Your heart t'ward homelier tides, and by this 'haviour,
Striving to near the best of all the lost—the Saviour ;
Knowing—having dipped your hands into the swell,
That though the whole great sea rushed up and fell

In one great wave upon you from above,
It could not wreck you half so deep as love ;
That path all paved with cruel crimson prints of
piteous feet,
Which fire burns behind you, hissing with the gall of
things too sweet.

And so drift on, my soul, and quaff

Whate'er shall fill thy chalice, as a sacrament,
Till planets crash, and earth, and half
The stars, shall drift beyond the firmament.

*A DREAM IS PASSING.**For Music.*

A dream is passing,

Passing, passing—

Whither away?

O bend your head, and veil the sigh

That floats in your breath as it passeth by.

Passing, passing—

Whither away?

My love lies still in a morning beam,

That passes the garden shade and her dream.

Passing, passing—

Whither away?

I hid me near in the trailing trees,

For wooing her dream from the wayward breeze.

Passing, passing—

Whither away?

It came to me once in an under-breath ;
But left me, and laid me alone with death.

Passing, passing—

Whither away ?

The angels slept in the purple clouds,
That go on their journeys in joyful crowds

Passing, passing—

Whither away ?

They hailed it nearing them there above,
And they took it to heart, for its name is Love:

Passing, passing—

Whither away ?

Pale sits the lily, and on her brow the light
The queen wears 'neath the silver bow of night.

Pale sits the lily, and reads in dreams maybe,
The holy page the night hides of her lore
Among her robes, and lives on earth no more,
Than doth the light of some soft melody,
Or star that seeketh foothold in the sea.

Like a bride that peereth through the light of earth,
To find some gentle dwelling-place of love,
She seems ever passing white realms far above
This dim light of the lily-bud at birth,
Burning high and burning low upon the earth.

VIOLETS IN LONDON STREETS.

*Quid non cernit amor !
Quid non vestigat amator !*

BEROALD.

NESTLING in the hedges shade

They grew,

Just where on the green 'tis laid,

A few,

They'd fill the air about the stile,

And hide,

And wanderers lingered there awhile

And sighed.

* * * *

All hustled in the market-place,

Bleak the morn

The widow brought them, with a face

Wan and woe

The passers crowd the homeless town

Indifferent.

She never smelt them ; up and down

The widow went.

Round lover's heart all flowers steal,
Aye ! they know how,
So often they are sent to tell
Their tales of woe.

A lover blind as lovers are
In shadow-lands,
Had eyes to see the flowers there.—
With tiny hands
Her child held up the widow's ware.

The lover paid her well,
And struggling through her face of care
Came such a wistful smile.

* * * * *

Some angel in a wandering mood
Had dropped the seed that grew,
To bring the little children food,
And your love's thoughts to you.

*AN IMPROMPTU.**After the Ball.*

SHE gave me a piece of her mignonette,

The mignonette,

Her mignonette.

Perhaps 'twas to tell me I must forget—

Perhaps that although we had hardly met,

Yes, hardly met,

Aye, hardly met,

That she knew how sorrow and grief and care

Lay deep underneath my worldly air.

That she knew,

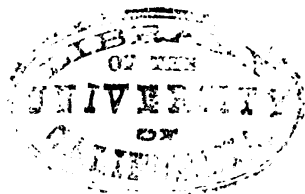
Aye, she knew

My heart was as gentle and tender and true

As her glance that had looked it through and through.

But whatever it was, my eyes are wet





As I sit alone ; and the mignonette
Is here in my hand, and it seems as though
Some angel had held in her hand just now

The only one flower I'd like to wave
Among the long grasses over my grave,
For the lovers to pluck as a talisman sure,
Since once it had lain in her hand as pure
As the fatally sweet mignonette.

There's a "Language of Flowers" surely true as it
flows

With its burden of love. For 'twere sin, God knows,
To be placing a lie in the lips of a rose.

But there's never a seer who could understand
The rapt world of meanings or sweet command
In a flower hid in a maiden's hand,
That you take when you clasp it to say good-night,
With the smallest press, and a searching light
Hung in her eyes like the silver flight

Of a falling star in an azure sky,
And with nothing said, not even a sigh,
And only the faintest, faintest good-by—

And the silently sweet mignonette.

*ELLE DIT "NON."**Audaces fortuna juvat, timidosque repellat.*

JUVENAL.

IL faut pourtant qu'un jour
 Mes bras ton cœur enlacent,
 Et que de mon amour
 Les doux transports t'embrassent

Mon être entier frémit
 Près de la bien-aimée,
 Et tout en moi gémit
 Quand elle est éloignée.

J'ai faim d'un seul baiser,
 Bien que mes yeux devorent.
 Sans jamais se lasser,
 Tes lèvres qu'ils adorent.

Mais j'attends que tes yeux en flamme

Parlent à mon cœur ébloui

De l'amour qui brûle en ton âme.

Ou ce "Non !" est un "Non" qui dit :

"Oui !"

A CRY OF LOVE.*

*"Et la jeune Princesse, pour résister à son
amour fatal, s'enfuit se cachant au Cou-
vent de Sorrento."*

—Grandes Chroniques de France.

I CRIED to Love, "O go away !"
And then one little sunny ray
Set all my dreams to joy again ;
I love the more the more the pain,
And when it seems 'twould go away,
I strain it nearer still to stay.

A hundred times, "O go," I say,
And in the cloister fall and pray ;
But in my sleep some old refrain
Gets tangled in my life again,
That when I wake with tears I know
I cannot, cannot let thee go !

**Set to music by the Author. Published by Brentano, New York.*





Love seems too great for earth ; the strife
Is worse than death, and more than life.
Arise ! for Love comes by, and pain
Is spangled on his wings and train.
He touches earth, to *live* on high ;
“ O kiss me once and let me die ! ”

THE SONG THEY LEFT ON THE TERRACE.

SHE is more loved than my heart's first love,
For there never was one as this is ;
Her breath is the swerve of a long lemon grove,
And her mouth is the gateway of kisses ;
Cold lips are mute and pulses flush,
When my arm round her loveliness closes ;
The scent of her hair is the soft-spoken air
That has opened the lingering roses.

The night moved with us as the crescent above
In the midst of the stars ; and caresses
Out-numbered the stars that it passed in the spheres
To the innermost Heaven's recesses.
And the words that we wove in the night-diadem
Were so strange in their accents and stresses,
Till the violets fell in the roses below,
Swooned in worlds, of bashful excesses.

THE SONG THEY LEFT ON THE 109
TERRACE.

Then we dived, in the morn,
In the stream that is born
In the mountain of sweet water-courses ;
And through the low land
We rode hand in hand,
Straining kisses to each from our horses !

And then noon glowed away
In a trance as we lay
In the glade that the shade intersperses.
Under flowers we crept,
And in odours we slept,
Hidden up in the laurels and furzes.

But I died in this love,
As the stars fall above,
To light dead lakes of the spirit ;
And our souls floating even,
Shall repeat it in heaven,
Where cherubims cluster to hear it.

ALY.

For Music.

Gaudendum cum gaudentibus
TACITUS.

"If the key is in the door": She said,
Come in,
Come in.

She blushed as she whispered it low, and laid
Her white little hand in mine, as though
'Twere some precious thing all flower-like made.
To set the wide world's heart aglow.

For she does not know that my soul lies still
As a child in her presence sweet.
With a mystic censer to guard her from ill,
My spirit lives there at her feet.

If the key is in the door: she said,
Come in,
Come in.

ALY.

111

But I brought her the scents from the cool moonlight,
And the sighs she hears round are from me.
I passed the chinks of the portals of night,
And came in on the wind from the sea.

I'm the moth that flies painfully too near her light,
And burn all to hear when she sings ;
And I catch all the notes from her lips in their flight,
And bear them away on my wings.

Come in,

Come in,

If the key is in the door : she said,

Come in,

Come in.

TWO FATES.

For Recitation.

We only ask for love to give it back.

THIS is a story of strange true love ;
 The gentle sway whose pleasure is to yield.
 How tell the tale?—how fair she was and false.

* * * * *

Her lover then, when I was brought to her,
 Loved her as the hour loves some melody,
 On which it slips away and dies. He felt
 A strange dark instinct—realized. She left him .
 Loved me ; until I too in time was left.
 She hoped then I would turn on her in wrath.
 Alas, I had but words to say how fair
 Her faults were. Bend me low, and pass to grief,

* * * * *

With power to make men felons, gods or mad,
 She held all things but happiness. There hung
 An evil number somewhere in the stars
 About her.

Haply there had been sword play

At first between her former love and me :
And better I had fallen. But he passed
From sight mysteriously, weirdly ; none
Knew whither. I writhed here in pain, and, quick
With life to feel the deathly souvenir,
Hating and loving aught that brought her back,
Lived on, and smiled, and laughed—upon my sleeve,
Above the parched shades and ashes cursed
Of half-spent hells of ruined passion.

We have all some phrase in life we cannot read
Without a thrill ; and so, once passing, late
For some Mayfair' repast, and driving through
The bye-streets of the shorter way, wherein
The sounding hoofs of high-bred steeds awoke
Unwonted clatter, I approached a knot
Of homely folk about a lonely man.

I stopped—I know not why—and mixed among
The loiterers there. "He's always so," they said,
All laughing. 'Twas he. Mad ! That former love
Of hers. A wise no-meaning look, and then
A second heaven lit his face, a weird
Beatitude ; his dress unchosen and awry ;

His hand to his head, as though to clutch and keep
His thoughts, all strewn among its silken snow.
His eye, fixed far above the weary brows
Of these unkempt waifs of the outer world,
Shone with the light 'that never was on earth
Or sea.' His lips moving, seemed singing things
Unheard of. Calm, peaceable, heedless and mad.

Singling me—he knew not why—"There—!" he said,
"There ;—there ! See her ! She bids me come. Her
hands

Are held to me ; her white enticing hands.
Her eyes rain azure love through each dark lash
And drop their kiss on me. 'Tis too much bliss :
O ! God—I'll hold my spirit still lest I
Go mad ; mad ; mad !—She calms me now, and kneels
By me—a queen !—an angel ! Hear her words !—
No ! not words—music !—for her voice is song,
Fear not, Marion—my love will last until
The end !"

The night grew woven fire. I fled,
And left the chafing steeds and gaping man
To drive to—Paradise, or where he would.
Home, I locked me in the inmost chamber

Of my house. O! *then* to have wept. But no,
My homeless eyes were hard and hollow—hot
As a crater ;—without one human tear. Dry
As a Tuscan river-bed in Summer.
It all came back, my hate of him ; my love
Of her ; and spilled my inmost blood again.
At last, there from the lowlit niche I tore
The cross that bore the Saviour down, and cursed
My brain. And would have beat it from my brow
To walk with him there hand-in-hand all night
In sorrow's squalid streets. Had he not all
That drink can give ? that life can give ? and love ?
MADNESS. . . Then I prayed ; prayed like the damnèd
man,
For whom all night they build a gallows tree.
Prayed that God would crush my haunting cry
From out my prisoned mind, "*It cannot be.*"
Until these mocking skies are broken through
And show that *this* life is the dream, and his,
The madman's rave, ALL that is reality :—
And that which is to be!



"A WORD OF TROTH."

For Music.

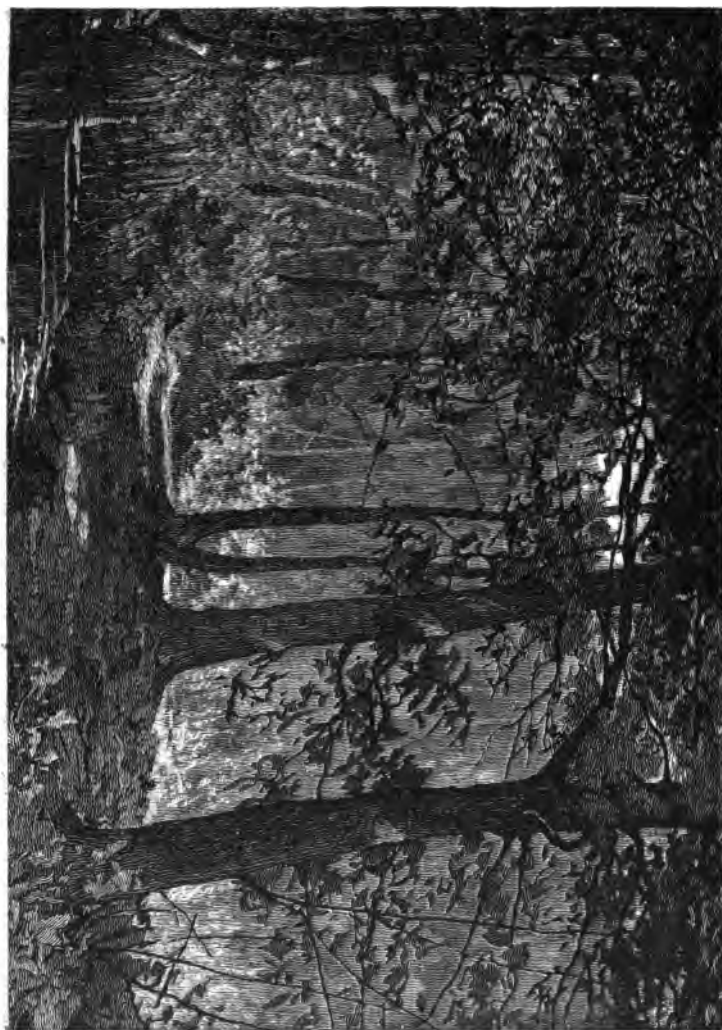
"Amor et melle et felle est fecundissimus."

WOULD you go, without one little vow,
 Would you leave without one little word,
 That would make Heaven's altars to glow,
 And an angel to write what he heard?

Not a word I could whisper through nights
 Full of tears that will come when we part,
 In the sweet Summer shadows and lights
 While the Summer is breaking my heart.

Not a word I can answer the breeze
 When it thrills me to death with thy name;
 And can tell to the leaves on the trees
 How it trembled like them when it came.

Not a word I could beg them to write
 On the stone they will lay over me,
 Just to tell how a wee little while
 It had linked me to Heaven and thee.





PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

REF.: Page VI., *Preface of Illustrated Edit'n.*

Reference having been made in the present edition to the pamphlet of "Press Opinions," a portion of a collection of abridged paragraphs—compiled for *L'Association Littéraire Internationale*, of Paris, by the British Delegate, for literary controversy—showing the similarity of the international opinion in Europe and America on certain characteristics of the poems, is subjoined to the present volume, with their dates.—ED.

"*Court Journal*," London, August 4th, 1877.

He either treats strong passions and strong situations grandly and powerfully, or glides softly through a tender love tale, and touches our inmost hearts.

"*Morning Post*," London, August 27th, 1877.

Elegance, tenderness, pathos and power.

"*The Mail*," Weekly Edition of "*The Times*," London,
September 25th, 1877.

Perfect in form and charming in tone.

"*Boston Evening Transcript*," 1884.

A European reputation as a poet and painter.

"*Examiner*," September 1st, 1877.

A mastery of English measure.

"*The Graphic*," London, December 22d, 1879.

Pathos and passion permeate these songs of love and chivalry . . . Tragically passionate, his pictures of love and life are painted in with powerful strokes, but their almost painful beauty is never marred by a coarse touch.

His verse is alight with love, but it is clean fire.

Essentially human, they are so full of music and manly sentiment that only a prurient mind could disapprove of them.

"*The Court Circular*," London, December 1st, 1877.

Highest elegance of versification and tenderness of sentiment.

"*Revue Britannique*," Paris,

The poems have a character perfectly Dantesque.

Lord Beaconsfield, 1878.

One of the most charming collection of poems I have ever read. "*La Légende de Leuville*," translated into French, would make a most picturesque and dramatic recitation.

"*Figaro*," Paris.

We (France) should be proud of them.

"*Whitehall Review*," London, 1879.

One can imagine some bibliophile of the future thumbing his graceful books and re-editing them as the most apt expression of the poetry of these days. We have no sympathy with those sciolists who have innocently, if not ignorantly, aimed their shafts at him, and he has suffered a perfect martyrdom of *petitesses* at their hands. . . . Especially a brimming over of a certain deep melancholy and flashing memories of a dare-devil but craving life, while he bears the *stigmata* of more than one great grief. . . . Let this ripen in his powerful mind, and the men and women of to-morrow will bear upon them the impress of his startling yet scholarly rhythm, and his refined talent as a painter.

Charles Leland (Hans Brietmann), 1879.

Poetical ideas in it enough for twenty books.

Charles Reade, 1881.

Fearless original and eccentric. Hans Brietmann is right. His work contains a California of poetical ideas . . . He seems to taste the Oxford "cynico-epicurean" sense of every word, though he is more a painter than a poet.

"*Manchester Courier*," December 27th, 1880.

The best living specimen of a combination of Count d'Orsay, Alfred de Musset and Swinburne.

"*The Aberdeen Journal*," September 1st, 1877.

Sweet poetic thoughts to secure a place far up the British Parnassus. Not in Browning is there verse finer than "Fallen," nor in Hood than "Daily Bread."

Arène Houssaye, late Ministre des Arts, Paris.

A poet equal to Byron, and a painter like Turner.

"*Le Pays*," Paris, May 25th, 1883.

He could be a Francis I., a Buckingham, Lord Byron, Richelieu, Athos, or even d'Artagnan.

"*La Patrie*," Paris, May 18th, 1883.

An apostle of the truly beautiful. A chief of the *true* æsthetic school . . . Has fallen into the error of not wishing to pander to the exigencies of the "*Pschutt*," the fashionable tyrant of to-day, and is immediately bombarded for ever with this irksome cognizance of "eccentric" and "original." In fact a man more calumniated hardly exists.

"*May Fair*," London, July 24th, 1877.

He makes us look to our national laurels and bays . . . Has approved himself worthy of a place in our English Pantheon. Poems flushed with the sunshine of the South: but that he can appreciate the colouring and melody of an English Summer day is well shown by his water-colour drawings and verses.

"*Chicago Times*," 1884.

A man of broad and liberal culture and wide travel, having crossed the desert, North Africa, Spain, and part of the American Continent, and enjoys high rank as a poet and painter. . . . Good Greek and Latin scholar. "*Entre-nous*" has in it poetical ideas enough for twenty books.

"*Albany Journal*," U. S. A., March 17th, 1884.

Rare literary ability and considerable reputation as poet and painter.

"*The Morning Post*," London, December 18th, 1877.

Neither studied nor conventional. . . . Thorough capacity to think and write in French and English.

"*The Italie*," Rome.

A contradistinction of all those books that only appear to die . . . "*The Bay of Villafranca*" will clothe the thought of the fisherman of that enchanted sea many a night . . . The outpouring of a heart that has suffered, consoling itself by helping others. . . . "*Aëlia*" is a romance, a gem; a perfect fifteenth century scene.

"*L'Opinione*," Rome.

Spontaneous, flowing, and harmonious, and many flowers gathered from our Italian soil.

"*Gil Blas*," Paris, April 16th, 1883.

Chivalrous; and neither maudlin nor feeble. He loves the strong, clear, frank laugh that is manly and cheering, and a love-song sung by a bold cavalier and a fearless gentleman. . . . A *littérateur* of the greatest talent, a painter of considerable power, and a son of France by reason of his heart and his wit.

"*Saunders's News-Letter*," Dublin, September 6th, 1877.

A vigorous, healthy tone, not much in vogue in these days of the "fleshy school." . . . Original and never obscure. . . . No mean contribution to the poetic literature of the day.

"*The Berlin Gegenwart*," Berlin, November 14th, 1877.

In one hand he holds a mastery of light *causerie*, in the other noble pictures with a charm of language so sweet that all seems wrapped in some soft Oriental robe. . . . Possesses the cruel reality, the enchanting ideal, in the highest degree. A fearless individuality, a freedom, a capricious originality which, compared with ordinary English poetry, is as the fleet free flight of an Arab barb in the wide desert to the monotonous amble of a park hack.

"*The Boston Globe*," Boston, October 18th, 1877.

There is something more in these verses than a mere reproduction of the obvious aspects of the world within and with out us; there is insight into their underlying significance.

"*The Art Journal*," London, March 2d, 1877.

The very highest order of power as well as grace. He has established his claim to prominent rank as one of the poets of the period.

"*Home Journal*," Boston, March 22d, 1884.

A European reputation as painter and poet.

Lord Beaconsfield, 1879.

Has created more envy than a First Groom of the Bed-chamber.

"*Home Journal*," New York, December 21st, 1881.

A remarkable man in many ways, with a head resembling the pictures of Lord Byron, and a manner almost child-like in its naïf, frank simplicity and boyishness. . . . His beautiful paintings are greatly admired.

"*Het Nieuws Van Den Dag*," Amsterdam, Sept. 26th, 1883.

Bekenden tegenstander. Æsthetisch streven.

"*National Tribune*," Washington, April 3d, 1884.

The poems became the rage at once. A veritable Admireable Crichton. . . . A fine artist, and writing in five languages. Strongly tinged with the realism of literature founded by Balzac and disgraced by Zola ; but he never approaches even the uncleanness of the latter.

"*Buffalo Courier*," March 18th, 1884.

A man of broad culture, a thorough linguist ; one of nature's born poets.

"*Manchester Courier*," Manchester, April 11th, 1883.

An advocate of the dare-devil chivalry of the Middle Ages.

"*Milwaukee Sentinel*," (Ella Wheeler), May 18th, 1884.

A knight of the Middle Ages ; a true poet.

"*High Life*," Paris, 1880.

Grand seigneur, homme de lettres, artiste amateur, semblable à ces nobles de la Renaissance italienne, dont le blason était dessiné par les Muses. Leur génie rayonne comme leur personne. Ses vers sont fils de son cœur ; ce sont les pages, émues ou gales, de son carnet de voyages . . . Bizarre et excentrique. . . Ses lauriers font un bel effet sur son blason.

"*The Boulevard*," Paris, July 10th, 1880.

We are irresistibly carried away far over the mountains into some half-known land, wildly beautiful and untrodden by the foot of man, whereof his poems sing the strange and grand music. Has the power to illustrate his books in black and white, besides being one of the strongest colourists in water-colour we have seen of late. A finished elocutionist, though generally modest enough to recite any one else's verses rather than his own.

"*Indianapolis Journal*," March, 1882.

Grand poetry indeed. Stands in the first rank of artists . . . Drawings far better worthy of study than the water-colours at the Academy of New York . . . Often paints on an ordinary paper pistol-target of his own, riddled in the centre by bullets.

"*The Gazzetta d'Italia*," Naples, August 11th, 1879.

The enthusiasm which immediately burst forth on his work was simply nothing beyond his great merits.

"*ITd Sporting & Dramatic News*," London, Aug. 2d, 1879.

Heartfelt earnestness.

"*Lowell Morning Mail*," November 14th, 1881.

Writes in French, English and Italian with ease. Contributed to the *Whitehall Review* and periodicals of note, and French journals. Can illustrate his works and recite his verse in a thoroughly artistic manner.

"*The Enquirer*," Philadelphia, December 18th, 1881.

He will divide popularity now with Tennyson. . . . Has oftener the hearty, manly ring of Longfellow. Has the power to recite his verse and illustrate his books with his own pencil—no mean one.

"*Home Journal*," November 9th, 1881.

The beau ideal of an artist, nor does this belie him in his pen-and-ink sketches. Not content with the laurels of Art and Poesy, he plucks a leaf from the brow of the sister muse.

"*L'Artiste*," of Arsène Houssaye, Paris, February, 1881.

A *je ne sais quoi* of freshness and spontaneity, a man full of feeling, bright, frank, and free. In some pages, though, the poet's sadness bursts forth in touching accents that have a fullness of beauty—a richness of metaphor that is simply magnificent . . . A strain of imposing and austere beauty.

"*Boston Beacon*," March 29th, 1884.

A man of culture and a thorough linguist.

"*Galignani's Messenger*," Paris, November 5th and 6th, 1883.

Is what Germans call *vielsietig*, a many-sided man . . . Capital verses with as much poetry as fine specimens of manly English.

"*Le Triboulet*," Paris, April 21st, 1881.

One of the most distinguished poets, and painter of great talent.

"*Le Soir*," Paris, June, 1883.

The chief of a new æsthetic school. The author of "*Entre-Nous*" is still a *furor*.

Carlyle.

Too much above people's heads to have a great success . . . An entire want of *floor* to all he writes and paints . . . The vulgar will probably hate him.

"*The Brighton Standard*," Brighton, Dec. 4th, 1879.

All breathe deep feeling, and are conceived under great and sad emotion such as stolid Saxons very rarely possess.

"*Le Globe*," Paris, October 12th, 1880.

A renowned Anglo-French poet.

"*The Daily Chronicle*."

Has made verse a method of giving to the world the fantastic but ennobling memories of days spent in travel so wild that it borders on the work of the explorer, and in keen observation of life in its most pathetic and graceful aspects The mediæval romance of "*Aëlia*" has a courage and unconventional freshness that show forth genius, that makes the light of the poetic sacred fire shine upon the faces of the readers. . . . A rich broiery of modern æstheticism in its highest sense. . . . He promises to give us an English form of the odes and poems of the classic poets in the Sapphic metre. . . . With him the race of true poets will not die out . . . His other varied talents have often had the usual faculty of raising in vulgar minds an utter chaos of envy and calumny, both of which have been used to their utmost against him.

"*World*," New York, March 16th, 1884.

A man of broad culture, a thorough linguist, and one of nature's born poets.

"*Detroit Post and Tribune*," May 18th, 1884.

Arsène Houssaye calls him a *luminaire* (a seeker after light) in his paintings Leans to the Salvator Rosa style, but toned by conscientious study of the Italian masters . . . Poetry in his painting, and painting in his poetry.

"*L'Illustration*," Paris, November, 1883.

Un des écrivains les plus distingués. . . . Revèlant un sentiment profond de l'æsthétique . . . Une organisation d'élite.

"*La Paix*," Paris, 1880.

Translation.

Fresh as an April morning with the tender richness of the spring. The thoughts in their soaring height, have the broad, strong wings of the eagle, held bravely upward and at ease; a ring of such a heart-rending sorrow here and there, that we know this poet has suffered, and out of his sorrow has come his song, with a sad sad note that *must* break forth despite all effort to keep it back. Imbued with a longing to heal all human woe, when he sings of it his heart thrills with a charity, a majesty, that is the true poet's cry of sisterhood to sorrow. . . . Knowledge of refined life, and the absolute aristocratic instinct in "*Chez l'Ambassadeur*."

"*World*," August 16th, 1884.

Possesses talent uncommon to rank. . . .

"*Le Gaulois*," Paris, November 19th, 1883.

Un *Antinoüs Hercule* : tire l'épée et le pistolet comme Saint-Georges, monte à cheval comme Fordham, cuisine comme Brillat-Savarin, parle presque autant de langues que le comte d'Arisson, et rime comme Musset. Sa devise est : *Faites !* — courte et fière.

Voici
Le personnage en raccourci.

. . . Vers pleins d'émotion et de tendresse, où le français et l'anglais se partagent parfois la rime. Fait songer à Victor Hugo et Ruckert ; c'est un Byron français ou un Musset anglais ; comme eux, il a chanté la femme et l'amour. Il a horreur des boudinés modernes, qui sont la négation de l'élégance et de la force. Aussi hardi voyageur que M. de Brazza.

"*Home Journal*," Boston, March 22d, 1884.

. . . A European reputation as a poet and painter.

"*Galignani*," Paris, November 14th, 1883.

. . . The *bon vivant* of taste and talent.

"*Boston Saturday Gazette*," May 17th, 1884.

Admired and enjoyed. Does all with grace, and dramatically. . . .

"*Northern Times*," England, 1882.

Not of the fleshly school, unless inasmuch as flesh means hard fibres and stern passion. Imagery often above the heads of untravelled men. . . . When Nimrod is a born poet he brings back from prairie and jungle the beauties of a fresh, unhackneyed mind. The works of the Anglo-French Nobleman are magnificent in this. A strange mixture of genius carelessness and erudition. Some very remarkable transcripts of the Sapphic metre, and some Greek iambs, also charming original poems in French and Italian. His general construction of phrase, however, is French.

"*Saturday Times*," Boston, April 5th, 1884.

. . . An elocutionist of no mean parts.

"*Le Soir*," Paris, July 13th, 1883

. . . Le poète *æsthetique*.

"*Daily Chronicle*," December 27th, 1882.

. . . An *æsthetic* nobleman. . . .

"*Chicago Tribune*," February 18th, 1883.

. . . Even calumny has not embittered him.

"*L'Italie*," Rome.

. . . Un artiste grand seigneur.

"*Boston Courier*," March 23d, 1884.

. . . Has distinguished himself both as poet and painter

"*The Roma*," Naples, October 2d, 1879.

. . . There is also all the fire of Byron's *Don Juan* in this fresh bright poet.

"*Times*," Chicago, May, 1884.

. . . An artist, a poet, a musician, and a fine painter.

"*Roman Times*," Rome, July 18th, 1883.

. . . He feels intensely, and feels like a grand, poetical knight of old. . . .

"*Express*," Buffalo, March 18th, 1884.

. . . All that a maiden's fancy ever dreamed.

"*Le Voltaire*," Paris, November 6th, 1882.

Un des plus extraordinaires champions que l'on connaisse.

"*Saturday Times*," Boston, March 22d, 1884.

A broad scholar, very superior linguist. Poems enjoyed the popularity of eight editions. . . . Highly praised on this side also.

"*Albany Evening Journal*," July 10th, 1884.

Rare mental endowments: manly, frank and intellectual.

"*Globe*," Boston, May 19th, 1884.

. . . With his deft brush he can paint the most charming water-colours, or with his facile pen write the most fascinating of verses. An extraordinary linguist, an adept in all the manly sports. Has received the highest encomiums from the press of this country.

"*Le Papillon*," Paris, May 6th, 1883.

Possédant le sentiment du beau à dose énorme d'un coloriste et d'un poète énamouré comme Musset, vivant comme lui la poésie et des rêves chevalresques. Quelques uns l'ont mal compris, mais il est simplement un homme d'infiniment d'esprit, ayant pour idéal tout ce qui est beau, noble, et bon dans son imagination puissante.

"*Le Soir*," Paris, November 5th, 1883.

. . . Poésies des plus attrayantes. . . .

"*La Liberté*," Paris, November 14th, 1883.

Polyglotte et voyageur intrepide: a fondé une école esthetique. . . .

"*Post*," Boston, March 21st, 1884.

A European reputation as a poet and a painter.

"*Weekly Argus*," May 3d, 1884.

. . . A famed writer and painter. . . .

Henri Ketten, 1879.

. . . Plus harmonieuses et plus adaptées d'être mises en musique que toutes autres poésies que je connais. Elles portent chacune une riche et douce mélodie toute faite entre leurs ailles. Mais le poète lui même a du avoir souvent senti les larmes aux yeux. Juste l'âme d'élite comme disait Litztz que les vulgaires tachent à détruire par la calomnie personnelle.

"*Gil Blas*," Paris, Nov. 2d, 1883.

Une personnalité Parisienne, mais connaissant à fond L'Italien, Espagnol, Allemand, Anglais, Français, Grec, et le Latin. . . . Charmant et original. Des vers pleins d'émotion et de tendresse. . . .

"*Detroit Free Press*," May, 1884.

An elocutionist. . . . His special gift is poetry; foreign critics have pronounced it worthy of the highest genius.

M. Molinari, of the *Journal des Debats*, Paris, 1877.

. . . Poésie bien charmante.

"*Le Reveil*," Paris, Ncvember 21st, 1884.

. . . Une personnalité comme il en existe peu; comme il n'en existe pas.

"*Transcript*," Boston, March 20th, 1884.

Rare attainments and rare literary ability. The only danger will be his giving too free a rein to his political fancy.

"*Morning Post*," London, August 7th, 1877.

. . . Each poem has a soul and body. He writes as though a thought had, as it were, become entangled in a mesh of sweet strong words,—words that have long been in love with each other but have only now got wedded.

"*Lutheran Observer*," Philadelphia, April 4th, 1884.

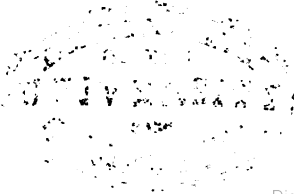
Broad culture, rare literary ability, and considerable reputation as a poet and painter. . . .

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